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SINO-JAPANESE SUPPLEMENT

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THE best news of the week is that new negotiations have begun between the British Government and Mr. De Valera. They reopen in a more hopeful atmosphere. That Mr. De Valera should have sought new conversations at all suggests that he must be in a less unreasonable mood than usual, though it always would be a foolish kind of optimism that expected Mr. De Valera to be accommodating. At least the negotiations will not be wrecked by a trivial demand to hand the disputed money over to London. That point at least is, we suppose, out of the way. Economic pressure must be playing its part: the effect of the tariff war is serious in England, but far more serious in Ireland, and, since it is to continue during the negotiations, the pressure will intensify. We should like to think the negotiations would be short and that the whole silly business would be soon out of the way. But a series of most complicated questions are opened by a discussion of the land annuities and the "other sums" usually paid by the Free State to this country, and for the time being it would be wiser to take in a stock of patience and keep the flags discreetly furled.

* * *

The long-awaited Lytton Report was issued last Sunday. Its proposals for the solution of the Manchurian problem are, as they were bound to be in the circumstances, in the nature of a compromise. The Commission of Enquiry represented Great Powers some of which at least had marked sympathy with the Japanese. Its members, besides Lord Lytton, were a French General with experience in Indo-China, an American General with Nicaraguan experience, a German ex-colonial Governor, and an Italian ex-diplomat. It was no small achievement to get unanimity (and the French representative, it is no secret, made it especially difficult) even for this moderate solution. It is, in fact, a very fair compromise between the legitimate claims of the parties. There is no condonation of the Japanese aggression. Manchukuo is treated as the sham that it is, and its abolition is called for. Chinese sovereignty over the Three Eastern Provinces is recognised as one of the fundamental conditions of a settlement. On the other hand, the Report is emphatic against a mere restoration of the *status quo ante*. Protection for the interests of the Japanese and other people is to be assured by a new regime, which will give Manchuria a large measure of autonomy, the assistance of foreign advisers, and a gendarmerie of its own, adequate to keep internal order and to resist external aggression.

* * *

All this, with the proposals for a series of Sino-Japanese treaties, economic and political, sounds very

promising. The difficulty will be to get the parties to accept it. The Chinese, to whom it offers the substance of their demands, should not, and we hope will not, reject it, when and if the League of Nations adopts the Lytton recommendations. But for the Japanese leopard to change his spots is another matter. Japan has dug herself in in Manchuria, and the withdrawal of her armies and the abandonment of her puppet State of Manchukuo will be regarded as an unthinkable surrender. We may believe, for the reasons given in our Supplement as well as in the Lytton Report, that such a surrender would pay Japan in the long run, and even in the short run. But the imperialists who are in the saddle in Tokio are in no mood to see where the true interests of their country lie, and we must obviously be prepared for their intransigence. What then if they will not budge? A heavy responsibility will rest on the members of the League, and in particular on Great Britain, whose attitude will be the deciding factor in the crisis. If Japan persists in refusing to come to terms not merely with China but with world opinion, then the world ought to take the necessary steps to bring her to terms. And if Sir John Simon, after this Lytton Report, persists in his old tactics, it will be his crowning mischief.

* * *

It was natural that Iraq should be received into the League fold with a flourish of trumpets. An old promise is fulfilled and proof given that a mandate is not always a shady disguise for imperialist expansion. Unfortunately, in fulfilling one promise Great Britain appears to have broken several others. Perhaps her war-time promises to Arabs and Kurds were mutually incompatible. In any case, a mandate involves a duty to protect minorities in the mandated territory, and all accounts we receive from Iraq agree that we are leaving the Kurds and Assyrians, let alone other minorities, in a singularly helpless situation. We are fully prepared to believe our correspondent, who urges that some military measures were necessary and that the R.A.F. were as humane as possible in bombing the Kurdish villages. But bombing native villages with delayed-action bombs is not a humane operation in itself, and we were bombing a population which was pleading for our protection and was entitled to it.

* * *

There is no weakening in the German attitude to the Disarmament Conference. The Papen Government has determined that Germany's claim to equality shall be recognised, and until it is—and in more than empty phrases—Germany will stay outside the Conference. This deadlock is serious enough to alarm even the tergiversators of Downing Street and the Quai d'Orsay, and the British Government has now proposed a Franco-British-Italian-German meeting in London for the purpose of finding a way out. Italy is agreeable; but M. Herriot has raised objections and suggested conditions, whilst the Germans, before they consent, still want assurances that they are being invited to a discussion on some basis other than Sir John Simon's recent deplorable Note. It is possible that the obstacles to the proposed parley may be overcome. But we are not optimistic about its results. There is not the slightest reason to suppose that Germany is bluffing in her demand for equality, and the only honest and the only sane way to meet her is for the rest of us to reduce our armaments. Are M. Herriot and Mr. MacDonald going to get up in a London Conference and say they are prepared to do that?

* * *

The recently retired Government of Count Károlyi is seen, in retrospect, to have represented a brief spell of liberalism in Hungarian politics. It was guided by people—such as Johann Teleszky, the man behind the scenes—who took a prominent part in pre-war Hungary, and its seemingly negative activities were in fact taken up in liquidating those Eastern traits in the administration which Count Bethlen's ten years' regime have left behind. Excessive and unauthorised expenditure by various Government departments was checked, graft diminished and a serious attempt was made to clear up past corruption and punish the offenders. The demands of agrarian demagogy were refused and some check was applied to the methods of the gendarmerie in suppressing all free expression of opinion. The official reason for Count Károlyi's resignation was loss of Parliamentary support, but subsequent events have shown that a more important reason was the uneasiness felt by the Regent, Admiral Horthy, about a Premier with Western manners and the cautious habits of an old-fashioned aristocrat. His place is taken by General Gömbös, Horthy's close personal associate in the organisation of the White Army in 1919, a man who took a prominent part in the White Terror and in the rebellion of Western Hungary in 1921, a founder of the secret societies, and a former leader of the anti-Semitic party in Hungary. He became afterwards Count Bethlen's Minister of War, and it was mainly the unauthorised expenditure incurred by his department which caused Bethlen's resignation last year. With such a man as Prime Minister it is not to be expected that the Government will tackle any of the grave problems—constitutional, social and economic—which are pressing upon Hungary. The best member of the new Cabinet is M. Imrédy, the new Minister of Finance. He is a director of the National Bank and an able economist, and is known to hold sane views in matters of inflation, exchange restrictions and budgetary equilibrium.

* * *

The Labour Party Conference, after defeating the Executive on Tuesday over the question of the joint stock banks, repeated its performance on Wednesday by passing Sir Charles Trevelyan's resolution in favour of pledging a future Labour Government to a clear-cut Socialist policy. In spite of Mr. Henderson's plea for a free hand, the resolution was passed by a very large majority, no card vote being challenged by its opponents. On both occasions most of the big Trade Unions seem to have been on the side of the victors, and Mr. Cramp, of the N.U.R., spoke in favour of the resolution. The moral which the delegates have drawn from the record of the Labour Governments of 1924 and 1929 is that the right course is the bold course, even if it means lengthening the time before electoral success. This should at least force the Labour Party to construct a definite programme instead of adopting its old tactics of putting everything that anyone would like into a

omnibus compilation. We are glad that no decision was made to tie the hands of a future Labour Prime Minister in the choice of his Cabinet. We do not see any Labour Prime Minister in the offing; but politics change quickly nowadays and we should like him to have a real chance of being Prime Minister if he is appointed to the office.

* * *

The Labour Party Executive were also compelled to take back for further consideration their report dealing with the socialisation of transport and electricity. The revolt came in this case from the Trade Unions. Mr. Herbert Morrison and the Executive proposed that the Managing Boards of socialised industries and services should be constituted by the Government with a free hand to select the most suitable persons without any representation of specific interests as such. The Trade Unions met this proposal with a demand that certain of the representatives of the Boards of Management should be nominated only after consultation with the Unions concerned. Mr. Morrison answered that, if the door were once open to the representation of interests, it would be impossible to resist similar pressure from other quarters. But the feeling of the Conference was obviously so strongly in favour of some element of workers' control that the Executive without challenging a division agreed to take the Report back for further consideration. The principle that socialised industries should be run not bureaucratically by Government departments, but by specially constituted Boards of Management was not questioned. The dispute turned only on the method of appointing the Boards. The fact is that the old idea of nationalisation *à la* Post Office is not now advocated seriously in any quarter. But the new forms of socialisation which are to take its place have not yet been thoroughly worked out, and a good deal more thought will have to be given to them before they find general acceptance.

* * *

Perhaps the most interesting thing that happened at Leicester was the formation of the Socialist League. No one yet knows what this body will be like: its origin is unlike that of any previous Socialist organisation. It is an amalgamation of two very different groups: the remnant of the I.L.P. members who did not wish to disaffiliate from the Labour Party. Their leaders are men like Mr. H. N. Brailsford and Mr. Frank Wise, who becomes chairman of the new body. The other element in the new organisation is S.S.I.P., the new Left-wing organisation founded by Mr. G. D. H. Cole and Mr. Ernest Bevin rather more than a year ago. Some members of S.S.I.P. feared that the amalgamation would mean the subordination of the research work of S.S.I.P. to the political activities of the I.L.P. But very good safeguards against this unfortunate result have been introduced into the constitution: every local branch of the Socialist League is pledged to have its own research office and the body is not, in its present mood, likely to be in the least like the old I.L.P. The Socialist League has the approval of the official Labour Party and may do a great deal to encourage realistic thinking and the growth of an intelligent socialism in the country.

We have received from Miss Sylvia Pankhurst a letter which is unfortunately too long for publication in full. Miss Pankhurst writes on behalf of Mrs. Matteotti, the widow of the murdered leader of the Italian Socialist Party. Mrs. Matteotti, Miss Pankhurst informs us, is still kept under the strictest guard, deprived of part of her revenue, and subject to many other forms of persecution. Few dare visit her after the experience of F. F. Nitti. Readers of his book, *Escape*, will remember that he was sentenced to five years on a penal island for the offence of presenting Mrs. Matteotti with a wreath of flowers for her husband's grave, while Mrs. Rosselli was arrested for the same offence and only liberated because of her British nationality. Miss Pankhurst writes:

> It is clear that Italian subjects in Italy can do little to give direct assistance to Madame Matteotti. It is for the people of other countries to intervene, as has often been done in history in other cases. . . .
>
> To deal with the persecution of the Matteotti family, the Women's International Matteotti Committee has been formed, and is securing adherents amongst prominent women in all countries. The object of the committee is, first, to make known the facts, and already the committee has secured publicity in the press of America, France, Holland, Spain, Austria, Germany and other countries. Secondly, to approach all the Foreign Offices of Europe. Thirdly, and very importantly, to secure an international agitation. Fourthly, to send an international delegation of women to Italy to negotiate directly with the Italian Government on Mrs. Matteotti's behalf. It will be the duty of this delegation to secure that the revenue due to Mrs. Matteotti shall be paid to her, and that if she desires to remain in Italy she shall do so in peace; or, if she wishes to leave the country, she and her children shall have passports and leave when they choose, in safety.

All those interested are invited to communicate with Miss Pankhurst at "West Dene," Charteris Road, Woodford Green, Essex.

* * *

The week's choice of new openings for those who like to belong to movements is not confined to a choice between the Socialist League and Sir Oswald Mosley's gentlemanly Fascism. There is also the D.O.R.A. organisation, designed, we understand, to overthrow such remnants of the "Dora" legislation as are still on the Statute Book. This fraternity makes a special appeal to the nit-wit, since it offers a striking array of impressive titles ("grand defender" "public benefactor," etc.), with a tasteful assortment of badges, these honorifics being awarded automatically to those who get others to join. We wonder, however, whether the resulting afflatus of indignation will succeed in achieving very much. It is doubtless true that we all suffer at times from the non-accessibility of drink, tobacco or amusement at a moment when we happen to want one or other of these things; but the sedulously fostered theory that we are still the victims of a war-time regime will hardly bear examination. And, despite the support given to the D.O.R.A. movement by a handful of "Bohemians" and litterateurs, one cannot resist the suspicion that its driving force (if any) will be the various organs of "the Trade." "The Trade" is already far too powerful an influence in politics. We hold out no special welcome to such a mixed organisation, in which the publican and the publicist, the cynic and the sinner, can only succeed ultimately in darkening counsel and confusing the real issue.

SOCIALISM AT LEICESTER

ACCUSTOMED to the hot air of political conferences and of Labour conferences in particular, the public may naturally assume that the Labour Conference vote in favour of nationalising the Joint Stock Banks was a mere manifestation of petulance. Clearly, many who voted in the majority had never thought out the issue involved, had never visualised the difficulties of carrying out such a policy, and had not in any case the technical equipment for judging the issue on its intrinsic merits. But the decision had, nevertheless, real importance. The delegates regarded this question as a symbol of the contest between those who desire to build the shattered fortunes of the Party by the old policy of "gradualism" and those who maintain that only a far more definitely and consciously Socialist policy can save a future Labour Government from the discredit and disaster which led to the downfall of the last. The vote in favour of the nationalisation of the Joint Stock Banks amounted to a repudiation of the gradualist attitude and a demand that the Labour Party should adopt a comprehensive Socialist policy which it should attempt to carry through in the life of a single Parliament.

The victory was the more decisive because it was won, not against a motion hostile to immediate socialisation, but only against the Executive's plea for a year's delay before it was asked to make up its mind. In refusing this delay the Conference had mainly two considerations in mind. First, in the heat of last year's financial crisis it had declared in general in favour of the comprehensive socialisation of the banking system, and any temporising with the problem would have been widely regarded as going back on what was done last year. In the second place, the prevailing view seemed to be that, if the Party really meant its return to office to be the occasion for a thoroughgoing policy of Socialism, the sooner and the more decisively it made its decision public the better would be its chance of converting the electorate to its point of view. A declaration of such a sort would be bound at first to frighten many doubtful electors; but the sooner it was made, and the clearer its terms, the sooner would the electorate get used to it, and the less open would they become to panic over such misrepresentations as the alleged threat to savings bank deposits of which so much was made at the last general election. Let us declare our full policy now, the delegates were in effect saying: by the time the next election comes there will have been time for us to explain it, and to disarm unreal fears. If we wait for the panic to be let loose from the other side, we know from the experience of last year what is likely to happen.

This reasoning undoubtedly carried considerable weight with the delegates at Leicester. Mr. Ernest Bevin, who spoke against the motion, appeared to oppose it largely on the ground that he doubted whether, even if it were adopted, an incoming Labour Government would ever have the courage to carry it through. But this argument recoiled against him; for defeated though the Labour Party is for the moment, one undoubted effect of its recent tribulations has been to turn the main body of its active supporters, including the active men in the Trade Unions, into convinced Socialists, who want, however confusedly and unprecisely, a forward Socialist policy. Mr. MacDonald and Lord Snowden can at least claim that they have done, in leaving the Labour Party, what they never achieved by remaining in it. They have made it Socialist in sentiment and objective.

That, however, still leaves the Labour Party with a long way to go before it can put its Socialism into a precise and constructive form, work out its various projects on sound business lines, and so give people confidence in its capacity to carry through a single important Socialist measure, let alone a comprehensive Socialist programme. The more immediate the issue of Socialism becomes, the harder it looks to carry a Socialist policy through to real success. A Conference of several hundred delegates is obviously no place for the foundation or discussion of the details of a constructive programme, but it can at any rate be said for the delegates at Leicester that they seem far more conscious of these limitations, and far less ready to listen to mere claptrap, than their predecessors were a few years ago. To the observer this year's Conference looks unexciting and for the most part unexcited, and he may reasonably feel doubts about the adequacy of the row of figures on the platform for the immense constructive task embodied in the policy of the Party. But the observer will be disposed to agree that these delegates mean business, and take their Socialism seriously within the limits set by their capacity and knowledge.

Here, indeed, lies the crux of the matter. The practicability of Socialism in Great Britian depends largely on the ability of British Socialists to convince the electorate, not so much that Socialist policy is right as that Socialist leadership and morale are equal to carrying it through with efficiency and courage. The Labour Party has not had time yet to recover either from the heavy blow which it received last year, or from the consciousness that its defeat, while financial panic may have occasioned it, was fundamentally caused by the defects and timidities of its own previous policy. It is still mentally engaged in shaking the dust of MacDonald off its feet, and in examining itself after its recent fall in order to make sure no bones are broken.

The great question then is whether the move to the Left—to Socialism as an immediate objective—that the Labour Party has undoubtedly made is creating in the ranks of its supporters the much-needed leadership of the future. For without stronger and more knowledgeable leadership, the new Socialism, like the old "gradualism," is destined to come to nothing. We, who believe that world forces are moving swiftly towards a situation in which the choice will be between a reconstruction of capitalism on lines destructive—for the time at least—of cherished democratic realities and aspirations, and a swift advance towards a Socialist system, needs must hope that this new leadership will come to match the new spirit which we discern in the counsels of the Party. But we can feel no certainty that it will come—only the certainty that the Labour Party has no chance at all of establishing Socialism without it.

THE END OF PROHIBITION

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT.]

SENTIMENT in the United States with regard to the Prohibition regime has changed with astonishing rapidity. The "drys," who, a short time ago, were resting on their laurels, secure in their control of both major parties and of both houses of Congress, and confident that the Eighteenth Amendment had come to stay, are on the run. The "wets," unable until recently to command the support of more than a small minority group in the country, hopelessly outvoted in Congress, convinced that they were in for a long up-hill fight, and content to agitate only for a modest liberalisation of the Volstead Act to allow the sale of light wines and beer, are on the crest of the wave, calling hopefully for repeal. Four years ago the Democratic Party was split from top to bottom because its candidate, Al Smith, who was a wet, had the temerity to disregard the party platform, which was dry, and to advocate the repeal of the Volstead Act enforcing the Prohibition Amendment and defining "alcoholic content." To-day the entire Democratic Party is joyfully wet, and even southern States which bolted the Smith ticket are adopting platforms calling for outright repeal, not merely of the Volstead Act, but of the Eighteenth Amendment itself. Scarcely two years ago the Republican Party was, except for a small group led by President Butler, of Columbia, who had long been advocating moderate reform, wholly dry, while its leader and President, Mr. Hoover, was referring to Prohibition as "a noble experiment," and hastily disclaiming anything which, like parts of the report of the Wickersham Commission on Law Enforcement, seemed to indicate a desire to end it. To-day the party is committed to a referendum on the question whether or no the amendment should be repealed, contains a very large minority demanding repeal as a definite unequivocal party policy, and is led by a candidate willing to go even further than the party platform, and to commit himself in favour of drastic reform along the lines demanded by wet opinion.

The change in political sentiment, of which the President's *volte face* is the most significant expression, is, of course, only a reflection of the change in popular sentiment. The politicians have all along cared less about Prohibition than their votes would indicate. It was definitely, and probably truthfully, said a year or so ago, when Congress was dry on every vote by a majority of ten to one, that a majority of its members would vote wet if they dared or if there were a secret ballot. Congress and the State Legislatures were bullied into voting Prohibition by a mass movement of public opinion, skilfully directed by the Anti-Saloon League. They have no principles and no strong personal convictions to keep them from reversing their tactics when the popular current has turned in the opposite direction.

There are signs recently that it has, that there is a sufficiently solid body of wet opinion in the country, willing to vote wet, to make it politically very dangerous to remain "bone-dry." For a long time the wet forces have been gathering strength. In recent years they have been lavishly financed by such men as John J. Raskob and Pierre du Pont, they have conducted a clever and continuous propaganda, and they have been able to catch the attention of the public. For some time the body of opinion in the country which was politically wet was very small, an overwhelming majority of people who were personally wet being convinced either that it was hopeless to fight against Prohibition once it had been safely incorporated in the Constitution, or that, on balance, as a policy for other people, and especially for working people, Prohibition was a good thing. In the last year or so the proportion of personal wets who were willing also to be politically wet has, however, very markedly and rapidly increased. On the one hand, the growing gravity of the crime situation, the lengthening catalogue of social evils that can be attributed to national Prohibition, has alarmed the whole country and has cast a grim shadow across the "noble experiment" which, as it prohibited alcohol, was to eliminate disease and crime. On the other, the collapse of the market and the passage of the prosperity which many people had thought to be the consequence of Prohibition, and of the economy and efficiency it had brought, has greatly diminished the force of the economic argument in favour of the Amendment and has disposed people to seek in the re-establishment of the drink trade a substitute for, if not an impetus to the revival of, other declining fields of employment and sources of taxation. A number of people who were inclined to favour or to tolerate Prohibition have now become convinced that there is a national urgency that it should be not nullified, as many of them had once hoped, but ended. Others, who were afraid to commit themselves while opinion was so strongly in favour of the *status quo*, have been quick to profit by the changing public sentiment and to jump on to the wet bandwaggon. The wet forces are at length able to poll their full strength, or something near it.

Even more striking, however, and offering a real prospect of speedy action, are the signs that, whereas previously personal wets have been inclined to be political drys, now the process has been reversed and rigid personal drys are inclining to vote wet. The President himself is a case in point. No one has obeyed the law more scrupulously or been more determined that it should be given a real chance of success. No one is less subject to normal wet propaganda or less likely to favour a return of the old conditions. What has made Mr. Hoover willing to confess Prohibition a failure, and to say that the bootlegger and the speakeasy, with their abuses and crime, and the increasing illegal traffic in liquor, leading to a disrespect not merely for the Prohibition law, but for all law, are as intolerable as the old saloon, with its political and social corruption, has not been any sympathy for the well-meaning citizen who would like a glass of beer. It has been the consciousness that lawlessness consequent upon the attempt to enforce a law out of sympathy with public opinion was getting out of hand.

No one has expressed the point better than Mr. John D. Rockefeller, junior, and there is no one from whom such a statement could have come with more force. Himself a teetotaller, subject to the most strict family tradition against drink, an early and a continuous subscriber to the Anti-Saloon League, an outstanding advocate of the view that national Prohibition had contributed markedly to national efficiency and, therefore, prosperity, Mr. Rockefeller has the ear, as nobody else in America has, of moderate opinion. His recent letter to President Butler, stating that the wave of crime and general lawlessness which had alarmed the country was directly to be traced to the breakdown of the Prohibition Law, that the abuses of the speakeasy were fully as great as those of the saloon, and the number of speakeasies greater even then than of the saloons they had replaced, and that, therefore, in spite of his belief in Prohibition, he was in favour of an immediate and drastic amendment of the law, counts in some respects for more than any plank in the Republican platform, or than any speech of the Presidential candidates, in indicating and in producing a change in public sentiment.

There is, therefore, a strong body of popular opinion behind the movement to amend the Prohibition Amendment. The whole Democratic Party, and a large minority of the Republican Party, are flatly for repeal. The President and the balance of the Republican Party, if one excepts a now small extreme dry minority, are for re-submission of the problem to the several States. Both

parties and both candidates are committed to a policy which, while offering safeguards against any return of the saloon or of the unrestricted drink traffic, and, while guaranteeing dry States against interference from outside their borders, involves an end of the present system whereby the "manufacture, transportation, or sale of alcoholic liquors," as defined in the Volstead Act, is illegal throughout the territory of the United States.

There are still real difficulties in the way of the American people in their now general movement towards the end of Prohibition. There is the difficulty of securing the majority necessary for a change in the Constitution, which would theoretically, no matter how overwhelming the public sentiment behind it, be permanently blocked by a minority of thirty-three Senators or thirteen State Legislatures. There is, in spite of the agreement between the parties on the main point, an agreement which would have seemed impossible a year or so ago, plenty of room for conflict in the determination of ways and means. There is, in spite of an unexpected wetness in the Republican policy, as defined by the President, a chance that the wetness of the country may help the Democrats, as the wettest party, in the campaign. There is, however, no longer any doubt that repeal of Prohibition is in the field of practical politics.

EAST ANGLIAN BY-WAYS

DURING August I covered some two thousand miles in Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk and the Cambridge borders, looking at farms offered for sale; the search revealed the extent of the trouble that has befallen the smaller arable holdings.

The first questions a purchaser must ask relate to the house and the buildings, how will the one serve his domestic needs, how will the other cover his live and dead stock? Though the price of building has fallen, repairs are costly and skilled men are passing. Thatchers, for example, are hard to find. After house and buildings comes the question of the land. Is it sound and reasonably clean, is it properly drained? Have hedges and ditches been cared for? If all these questions can be answered satisfactorily, one can proceed to inquire into the charges on the land, the cost of labour, and the possibilities of a return on the outlay involved.

There are some who hold that in the practice of imaginative writing the reporter of the popular dailies is *facile princeps*; this is a gross error. The gentlemen in the offices of estate agencies can leave him standing still. A house with defective roof; lintels against which the unwary break their heads; bulging plaster, rotting window frames, and an utter absence of foundations, water and sanitation, becomes "a desirable Tudor residence" by reason of the oak frame on which the lathe and plaster rest. "Spacious and commodious" farm buildings may be covered with rotting thatch or rusty corrugated iron; the fields laid down, or fallen down, to grass may be waterless; tithe and other rent charges may have reduced all possibility of profit at current prices to zero; hedges and ditches may be in the last stages of neglect. But the gentleman responsible for the particulars, for which in one printed line at the foot of his sheet he disclaims responsibility, has seen through rose-coloured glasses or has even thought it unnecessary to look. "I'm sorry," said the urbane representative of a reputable firm who sent me to see a place forty miles away, "but I didn't know that somebody had built a saw mill up against it and that you reached the gate through the yard. The fact is," he added when I mentioned other disadvantages, "we haven't been able to run over and see the place!" That privilege was reserved for possible purchasers.

Before I had covered more than a few hundred miles one aspect of the truth was clear: there are in East Anglia dozens of small farms and tens of thousands of acres of land that will cost more than they are worth at present prices to bring back into condition. I spoke to a score or more of the men who are making a desperate effort to shift their burden; their plight is pitiable, the Recording Angel will surely pass their fictions by. "I am up at five o'clock in the morning," said one, "and I keep going till I can't see, and I've been spending a penny to make three-farthings all the time. Now, I'm at an end." "I used to keep three men," said another, "now I have one and I find myself envying him on Friday night when he takes his thirty shillings. He has earned it."

"You'll find the land foul," admitted a third frankly, "there's no purpose in denying it to anybody with eyes in his head. I admit it has beaten me, but I work from light to dark and I can do no more."

Ranges of farm buildings that would cost thousands of pounds to build to-day have been allowed to fall into ruin for the want of a little care. If the south face of the thatch had been covered with fine-mesh wire, the sparrows and starlings would not have pulled it to pieces. Had the great barns been ridged and had their cracked tiles been replaced they would have been saved. A few gallons of paint and tar would have maintained the weather boarding on hundreds of buildings. But many small farmers bought their land after the war lest it should be sold over their heads; others bought it because they believed that the Government was in earnest when it passed the Corn Production Act, and found themselves possessed of farming units that became uneconomic so soon as prices started their long decline in the summer of 1920.

To-day the cornlands of England are full of small farms whose owners cannot by reason of their losses take advantage of the guaranteed wheat prices. "I couldn't get the land clean enough to grow much wheat," said one farmer, whose acreage is above the average; "I've lost control of it."

It is on the lands of these men, who are their own landlords, that the burden of tithe falls heaviest. A couple of hundred acre farm may show no more than a gross profit of a pound an acre, many cannot show so much, and there may be a tithe charge of seventy pounds on that, leaving the farmer two pounds ten a week on which to live, support a wife and family, and carry out essential repairs to house, buildings and machinery. This is not a hypothetical case. "This may be a just charge," said one of the countless farmers who have been summoned, "say it is, if you like. But it is a fact that I couldn't pay it if I would. In 1931 my land didn't yield the tithe." I can say deliberately that there are farms in Essex and East Anglia that cannot grow enough to pay the parson until they are brought back into good cultivable condition, and in the present conditions of their handling this is out of the question.

It follows that the plight of the parson is often no better than that of the farmer, but many churches are superfluous to-day, because the congregation has passed and the village has disappeared.

The necessary labour and machinery are not within the owner's means; to make matters worse, the weeds and the vermin that are spreading unchecked pass from farm to farm. "I have a good trapper in every three months or so, he always gets the place clean, but the rats come on from near farms when they have overbred there." So said a farmer who, while keeping his rats in check, allowed dock, thistles and nettle to grow all round his buildings, thus offering secure harbourage to the vermin he seeks to control.

The main question that arises from this tour through the depressed agricultural areas is one of some importance to the country at large. What is going to be done to bring the derelict land into heart again? You can buy it from five pounds an acre or even less, if taken in bulk, but to bring it back into good condition would demand more than its capital value. I suggest that the County Agricultural

Authorities of the depressed areas should be urged to make a return of the derelict land within their boundaries and should at least use the powers lying to their hand to control the spread of vermin and noxious weeds. With the facts and figures before them, the County Authorities, the Ministry of Agriculture, and ultimately the Government might then consider the best means of making the land cultivable once again and seeing that it is not allowed to revert to worse than prairie conditions.

Those who believe that the benefit of guaranteed prices or even of restricted imports can reach the farms where owner, house, buildings and land are down and out, imagine a vain thing. The only farmers to gain by the change are those whose financial strength or clever husbandry has enabled them to pay their way and keep their holding clean. A derelict farm is not only a burden to its owner, it is a source of danger to neighbouring land. The fair surface of East Anglia is riddled with centres of infection where men have struggled with inadequate resources against the distributing interests. For if there is one truth that cannot be assailed it is that given a fair share of what the consumer must pay for his bread, meat, milk and vegetables, these farmers could have kept their homes about them and their land in heart. S. L. B.

A LONDON DIARY

I SEE that some of the most vehemently anti-Socialist organs are supporting Mr. Lansbury's plea that if Lord Snowden, Mr. Baldwin, Sir Herbert Samuel, and Sir John Simon are allowed to broadcast, the Labour Party ought also to have a chance. Clearly fairness in this matter is vital to the very notion of democracy. For the first time in history politicians are able to speak directly to millions of people, and I suppose Lord Snowden's broadcast during the election of 1931 was the most influential political speech ever made. Last year he impressed on every householder and housewife that we were faced with ruin, that the policy he had himself advocated all his life was "Bolshevism run mad," and the Government he himself was going to support would not have a mandate to impose tariffs. After a year of tariff policy he now explains on the wireless that he has been betrayed. The gist of his speech was that he, a "plain citizen," had been diddled by the wily Mr. Baldwin. Mr. Baldwin replied like the good fellow we all know him to be. He used all the right phrases: "The ship was heading for the rocks"; "it was a case of all hands to the pumps." He appealed for our "confidence in difficult circumstances." As for his resigning colleagues, he had "no time to indulge in criticism or recrimination" and felt no bitterness. This was not exactly an answer to Lord Snowden, but it was a good joke and perhaps the wisest kind of reply.

* * *

For years there has been a flat problem in London. Ten, even five years ago, landlords could not cope with the demand for flat accommodation. Rents were preposterous and tenants taking small flats were forced to pay "premiums" of twenty pounds and upwards for some unwanted gas brackets and a piece of decayed linoleum. The depression has changed all this. There is still a flat problem. But it is the landlord's this time. Financial stress is overtaking middle-class flat dwellers, and they can no longer pay rent on the scale of £150 for two rooms, a bath, and a kitchen. A day or two ago I walked along a typical Bloomsbury street containing less than a hundred houses, and counted fifteen "flat to be let" boards (some of them I regret to say, said "flat to let"). Five years ago, the appearance of one such board would have set all the neighbourhood agog, for the only way to get a flat was to snap it up before it was empty. Recently I saw that a lady was advertising in the *Times* agony column that, though she has just spent £4,000 on redecorating her Belgravia flat, she was willing to waive any premium, and would let it at the bare rent in order to secure a tenant. I hear, too, that the owners of several of the new giant blocks of expensive flats which have been built in the West End are begging people to occupy them on condition simply that they will curtain the windows decently and move out at a moment's notice to make way for a genuine paying tenant.

* * *

Meanwhile, the flat habit extends among the poor. It is encouraging to watch the progress of housing societies in St. Pancras, Marylebone, Kensington, Bethnal Green, and elsewhere, which build first-rate flats and let them at rents which slum dwellers can afford. The most interesting of these experiments is in St. Pancras, because there the Housing Association pays its way. I mean by that that it does not rely on gifts of money but on raising money at 3 per cent. It has paid this modest dividend from the start. It is worth while walking round to look at the new blocks as they go up just to the east of Euston Station. Down comes a deplorable set of bug-ridden, dilapidated, hopelessly overcrowded cottages and up goes a jolly block of flats with plenty of space round them into which the actual inhabitants of the cottages move, to their great delight, at the same average rents that they formerly paid for their slum rooms. Real "re-housing"—and that idea is one thing to Mr. Greenwood's credit—is the most cheerful event in London.

* * *

The St. Pancras House Improvement Society publishes an excellently produced little magazine called *Housing Happenings*. In the current issue I recommend a short article on the finances of being out of work. These two short stories are worth quoting: A packer who had been out of work for two years was on the point of getting a job when the new employer looked again at his insurance cards. "Two years! I'm afraid you're out of practice." "I should be all right once I started," urged the man. "No, you'd be too slow—no use to us." So he is still out of work—getting slower, I suppose. Another unemployed man asked for a job in these words: "Anything will do. Foive quid a week cleaning grivestones will do me."

* * *

I do not know how long this absurd economic system can survive in the face of the simple facts of unemployment. What do the snobs who talk about the unemployed drawing the dole and going to the pictures think these men ought to do with their time? I know that one of the things the younger men feel most bitterly is the deterioration of their physical strength. Every morning I notice a group of them doing physical jerks on a trapeze and parallel bars in a children's playground near me. I believe the Ministry of Labour is doing a thoroughly popular as well as a useful thing in arranging in some districts for a couple of hours of physical culture for unemployed men under thirty. In one case I hear that the young men vehemently complained when their physical jerks class came to an end. I would go further and urge that as many halls as possible should be thrown open for the use of young men who want to keep fit. It's just silly of Mr. Maxton to talk as if this is "militarisation" or some subtle kind of propaganda. Let him consider such physical culture as preparation of young warriors for the class war if he likes—"lamp-post" drill would have a good revolutionary sound.

* * *

The preliminary week-end meetings before Labour Party Conference at Leicester were held in a hall in the market place. As I walked past the crowded booths to hear Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb give their impressions of Soviet Russia, I was suddenly pulled up by a large streamer which said in red letters: "Webb's Tripe: it's here." It was only an inoffensive butcher advertising his wares.

"Lord Snowden, for instance, having done as much as any single man whatever to bring the country into its disastrous plight of a year ago, worked splendidly to repair his own errors at an almost crushing cost to the country."—J. L. Garvin in the *Observer*, Oct. 2nd, 1932.

* * *

"It is good to see a great paper like the *Sunday Dispatch* featuring religion. It should encourage preachers to devote their attention to spiritual topics."—The Rev. Dr. J. C. Carlile, reported in the *Sunday Dispatch*, Oct. 2nd, 1932.

* * *

"He rather gathered the impression he might be a kind of cat among the pigeons, if elected. He did not know that he quite wished to fill that role, but if he thought a thing should be said, he would not hesitate to say it.

"He was delighted to have Mr. —— as a fellow-horse in the shafts. In the past he had crossed swords with him on occasions. . . ."

Report in provincial paper of a speech by newly selected candidate for Municipal election.

* * *

"We are not told what Mr. de Valera wants. We are profoundly convinced he should not get it."—*Evening News*, Oct. 5th, 1932.

CRITIC.

EAR-RINGS

THERE is, I imagine, nothing to be said in favour of ear-rings. Yet, even before I had begun to write this sentence I found myself wondering whether it is true. Can any custom have endured as long as the custom of wearing ear-rings without having fairly good reasons for its existence? To the philosophic mind it seems probable that there is something to be said for nearly everything that is or has been common—for infanticide, polygamy, slavery, freedom, and all sorts of things. And, if a case can be made out for infanticide, why not for ear-rings?

A Frenchwoman who performs the operation of ear-boring on members of the English aristocracy and plutocracy declares that the girls of to-day have shorter ear lobes than the girls of the past, and attributes this largely to the abandonment of ear-rings. She expresses her enthusiasm for the recent spread of the custom of wearing ear-rings on the ground that ear-rings are not only beautiful in themselves, but, by their weight, prolong the "lobe," a long and well-defined lobe being a mark of intelligence and strength of character. How pleasant it is to think that intelligence and strength of character are so easily obtainable! Who would toil painfully after virtue for a lifetime if the end could be achieved by merely hanging weights in the ears? Presumably, it is with this noble purpose that the members of an African tribe hang stones weighing nearly three pounds in their ears, holding, according to the *Encyclopædia*, that "the lobes of the ears should be enlarged so as to be capable of meeting above the head." Would that the statesmen of Europe would lengthen their ears in some such fashion! Our politics have been short-lobed to a disastrous degree, when all that was needed was that our statesmen, when meeting in council, should each wear the weights from a grandfather clock in their ears. If they did this they would not only look different, but behave differently. Problems that now take five years to solve would then be solved in five minutes, so much would the intelligence of our rulers be quickened, such force of character would be generated by the dependent weights.

I doubt, however, whether the Frenchwoman whom I have quoted would seriously base her defence of ear-rings on the theory that they are an effective substitute for Pelmanism. Her enthusiasm for them is chiefly due, I suspect, to the belief, not that they strengthen a woman's character, but that they emphasise her femininity. "Women," she declares, "are no longer ashamed to be feminine. Ear-rings have always been, and still are, an essentially feminine adornment. Not only do they add to a woman's *chic*, but they constantly remind her to make the most of her feminine charm." One may reflect, on reading this, that one has never seen a human being less feminine-looking than a Grimsby fisherman with gold rings in his ears, but the fact remains that, among Europeans on the whole, ear-rings are as much a mark of femininity as pearl necklaces or high heels. Whether any of these things is necessary to femininity or increases it, however, is doubtful. I grew up in a world of ear-rings in which every nursemaid had her ears bored, the lobe being steadied against a cork for the operation. I never noticed, however, any great difference of femininity between those who wore ear-rings and those who did not. Everybody who was female was also feminine in those days, and would have looked feminine even in the clothes and boots of a navvy. Various authorities, such as Count Keyserling, however, assure us that in recent times femininism has all but killed femininity; and, if this is true, it may be that we are seeing, in the revival of ear-rings, a jewelled renaissance of woman as she was before Nora. Charm is being reborn, and before long London may be populated again by women as adorable as the Victorian heroines of the *Family Herald Supplement*. They will be exquisitely brainless, as half the male sex has always wished them to be, since, if a woman wears ear-rings, "they constantly remind her to make the most of her feminine charm"; and if a woman is being constantly reminded to make the most of her charm she will not have much time to think about anything else. At the same time, I cannot help wondering whether this is certain to be the effect of wearing ear-rings. Do they make a faint tinkle or whisper as they swing from the ears, serving as a still small voice that warns the potentially masculine woman: "Be feminine! Be charming!"? I should have thought rather that a woman would in time grow unconscious of the presence of her ear-rings as I am unconscious of the presence of my watch. My watch, being of a kind that no woman has ever worn, is a symbol of masculinity, but I do not find that at a crisis it ticks out the reminder: "Be a man!" Nor, indeed, do I like the notion of these mystic aids to character-formation. I should hate to sit beside a woman who wore ear-rings, and feel that all the time they were reminding her to make the most of her feminine charm. How would it be possible to discuss the Manchurian situation seriously with her while her pearl ear-rings were swinging their dreadful message with every movement of her head?

I suppose I am prejudiced against ear-rings, trinkets, and jewellery of all sorts. Theoretically, my hero is Savonarola with his Bonfire of Vanities. I know women who cannot read of that noble destruction of superfluous armaments without a cry of pain. They are as much horrified as they would be if they heard that a well-meaning man had blown up the Louvre or the British Museum. My own feeling in the matter is that nothing that Savonarola assisted to destroy was one-hundredth part as beautiful as the passion with which he destroyed it. In the solitude of my study I hold that the world would have missed nothing of importance if the precious metals and precious stones had never been discovered. That merely shows what a considerable hypocrite I am in the solitude of my study. For I find that, outside my study, I am conscious of being pleased even if somebody says a good word about my watch-chain. There is nothing remarkable about my watch-chain, and I did not choose it myself, yet, at such times as it has been favourably noticed, I am positively glad that I am wearing it and not a piece of string or a leather thong across the lower left-hand side of my waistcoat. Yet I lack the imagination to sympathise with the pleasure women take in wearing far prettier things than this. As a rule, I do not even notice what ornaments a woman is wearing, unless they are conspicuous almost to the point of being grotesque. I can come away from a party without knowing which of the women present were wearing ear-rings and which not. Jewels are more or less wasted on me. I wonder, however, whether, if all this ornamental frippery were suddenly to vanish, I should not be dimly aware that something was missing—that life had

lost something of its sparkle and delight. Could human beings who wore no ornaments ever experience the desirable pleasures of vanity so fully, so gaily, as our more and more ear-ringed contemporaries? The philosopher may be happy in possession of nothing, and the highest happiness conceivable may be that of a man who is indifferent to possessions. But, on the ordinary plane, the human being who is brought up without possessions is starved.

Many realistic novels—which, I hope, are not very true to life—describe the miseries of children in a toyless, joyless world which even a rag-doll or a tin soldier would have converted into a paradise. A child possessing a toy possesses something associated with the world of pleasure and imagination, and rings and necklaces and ear-rings are the toys of the grown-up. To possess a pair of ear-rings which everybody who notices them admires or pretends to admire—does it not provide moments at which life seems to have a happier heart-beat? Few pleasures are more exquisite than to have one's possessions—especially one's useless possessions—praised. I know, for I possess an almost useless watch-chain. I conclude, therefore, that there is something—indeed, much—to be said for ear-rings.

Y. Y.

POSSESSION AND THE LAW

A reflection of certain newspaper "leaders" on the Lytton Report.

ONE Smith, so say the Law Reports,
Invoked assistance from the Courts
To hold in peaceable possession
A house of his, which—with profession
Of certain tenant-rights therein—
His neighbour, Brown, essayed to win
By *vi et armis* breaking in.
The Court, without the least compunction,
Refused an interim injunction,
Lest Brown should feel himself annoyed
If rude policemen were employed
To hamper, with extreme ill-breeding,
His chosen method of proceeding;
Then, to conceal their indecision,
Set up an erudite Commission
To ascertain the facts, and state
A case on which to arbitrate.
The said Commission duly sat,
And Brown broke in no less for that.
At length there came before the Court
An irrefutable report
Which proved, all quibbles set aside,
That Smith had justice on his side.
To which the leering Court replied—
"These facts, had they been earlier known
Some cause for action might have shown.
'Tis now too late; by Brown's transgression
He's placed in absolute possession,
And that, so says the ancient saw,
Is nine (at least) points of the law.
Who then are we to interfere?"
Perhaps you think the story queer—
Yet that, our weightier journals say,
Is how the League should act to-day.

MACFLECKNOE.

Correspondence

BOMBING THEM INTO THE LEAGUE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Englishmen living in undeveloped areas quickly acquire a paternal attitude towards the inhabitants, and in any controversy are inclined to have partisan views. Captain Mumford is no exception to this rule, and it is not surprising that in his recent article in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of September 24th he tends to stretch facts in favour of the Kurds and to minimise or even neglect those points that vindicate the actions of the Iraq Government.

It is not the purpose of this letter to enter into a discussion of the Kurdish problem, but simply to correct some misapprehensions that may have arisen in the minds of readers as to the particular part played in recent operations by the Royal Air Force.

Captain Mumford states that after the unfortunate incidents of the elections "the exasperated Kurds were driven to rebellion." This is hardly correct; the election riots took place in Sulaimania on September 6th, 1930; about September 18th the famous Sheik Mahmud came into Iraq territory from Persia in contravention of his solemn undertaking given in 1927. He gave the excuse that he was going to condole with two Sheiks in Kurdistan on their recent bereavements; actually, as was soon evident, he came in to try to raise the Kurds to rebel against authority as he had done previously. In spite of his great reputation he met with remarkably little success. The Kurds did not rise *en masse*; small numbers joined him as he moved through different villages and most of them left him when he moved out of their district. The numbers were never more than a few hundred and the situation, though troublesome, could at no time be described as dangerous. If Sheik Mahmud with all his influence and the reputation of his previous exploits failed to get a large following, the exasperation felt by the Kurds against the Government in Baghdad cannot have been of great strength. As soon as Sheik Mahmud surrendered the troubles ceased and a few weeks later King Feisul and the High Commissioner were able to make a tour of Southern Kurdistan and all the important tribal leaders came in to meet them.

To turn to the Sheik Ahmed of Barzan. For many years past it had been realised that so long as the Barzan area was uncontrolled it was a possible source of danger; the situation there also contributed towards delay of the Assyrian settlement. As far back as 1928 it had been decided that it must be brought under the same degree of control as the rest of Iraq. It was intended to do this by the method of peaceful penetration, pushing forward police posts, with the temporary protection of infantry and under the umbrella of the R.A.F.; it was hoped that this would be accomplished without a shot being fired. The operation, however, would necessarily be slow, and owing to other events in the desert and in Kurdistan it was found impossible to carry out the operation before 1931. But in the summer of that year matters were brought to a head as the result of some raiding and counter-raiding between Sheik Ahmed and the neighbouring tribes in the Shirwan and Baradost districts.

In November Sheik Ahmed sent a force of 700 men into the Lolan district, several villages were destroyed and many inhabitants were killed or burnt to death or otherwise murdered after capture. Sheik Ahmed was called to account, but ignored the Iraq Government and so operations became necessary to enforce law and order.

These operations were started by the Iraq Army. Those who know the country best will best realise the difficulties to be overcome by troops on the ground and will be the least drastic in their criticisms of an inexperienced force; but the fact remains that the Iraq Army failed. Thereupon it became necessary for the R.A.F. to take action. The method adopted was similar to that carried on against Sheik Mahmud, the intention being to achieve the object not by causing casualties but by so interfering with the normal life of the people that conditions would gradually become unbearable and they would be brought to terms. The method of doing this in Kurdistan was to compel the people to evacuate their villages and to remain out of them. Before any bombs were dropped warning notices in Kurdish were dropped over the whole area, in addition to which a loud speaker was fitted up in a troop-carrying aeroplane and warnings were broadcast to the people by this means. The fear of being bombed caused the inhabitants to evacuate their villages, but it was also necessary to keep them from returning by night. For this purpose time-fuse bombs were dropped by day which exploded afterwards at regular intervals of some hours, the inhabitants being warned fully in advance what was to be done. To quote from the warning issued, "some of the bombs may not explode at once, but only after some hours."

In due course the operations were successful. Sheik Ahmed's followers gradually left him and surrendered and the Sheik

himself went across the border and surrendered to the Turks.

I toured over the whole area immediately afterwards. As far as could be ascertained the total casualties amongst non-combatants were quite negligible. The few casualties which did occur, and I only heard of three, must be regarded as regrettable accidents and it may safely be said were far less than would have been caused by any other method.

The implication in Captain Mumford's article that Sheik Ahmed of Barzan was a sturdy patriot defending the rights of the minority against an oppressive Government is somewhat wide of the facts. Sheik Ahmed, in the words of the High Commissioner was "notorious for the tyranny and oppression of his rule," and from conversations with the inhabitants on the spot it is evident that no one was more thankful to be rid of the oppressive Sheik than the majority of his own unfortunate tribesmen.

In conclusion, might we not, as Englishmen, remember that it is our duty to support not only the rights of the minorities of Iraq but also the authority of its Government? It has a difficult task before it, and it was *we* who put it in place.

F. H. HARRISON.

[Captain F. H. Harrison was serving as an Intelligence Officer with the R.A.F. in Kurdistan (Iraq), 1929–32.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

CIRCULAR 1421

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—May I thank you for your attack on Circular 1421 which proposes to put an end—except on a severe income limit—to the Free Place movement for secondary education, which started twenty-five years ago.

In a pamphlet issued by the Board of Education in 1927 emphasis was laid on the fact that free places "must not be regarded as scholarships awarded for exceptional merit, but they should be open to any public elementary school child who reached the ordinary standard of entry." Although the number of free places has now reached 44 per cent. of the total number of secondary school places, the competition for them is so keen that it is a matter of common knowledge that the parent who can afford it can get his child taken as a fee payer—provided he reaches a certain standard—at the same school at which he failed to win a free place. We are still far from the Board's ideal of placing all children on the same footing, which would involve a large increase on the present number of free places. Now the policy is to be reversed—for what reason?

According to the Circular it is wasteful of public funds to admit pupils to secondary schools without regard to the capacity of parents to pay, also that fees charged often bear but a small proportion to the cost of the education provided. But this is equally true of elementary education. The school age has been raised, the curriculum enlarged, the amenities improved during the last decade, and the Board has recently been pressing local authorities to reorganise elementary education and to build or adapt senior schools to which all children shall be transferred at eleven.

Since the large majority of free placers come from elementary schools, their parents are presumably as capable of paying something towards their education between the ages of five and eleven as they are from eleven onwards, but even the most extreme "economist" would hardly propose a fee for elementary schools. The only reason would seem to be that years ago it was decided that it was to the advantage of the nation that its children should be educated for a certain number of years, but that anything beyond the compulsory age at the moment is a luxury and must be paid for as such. The institution of free places was an attempt to assail this position and to establish the contrary, namely, that it was in the interests of the nation that every child should have the education for which he was most fitted. We did not try to achieve this by reducing the privileges of the rich, but by increasing the opportunities of the poor. Now we are going back a quarter of a century to the anti-democratic attitude to education.

France has recently made secondary education free and has at the same time adopted a certain scholarship standard. Children who do not reach this standard either have to leave or pay fees. Once more the logic of the French is demonstrated. If this system were adopted here and the fee increased in proportion to the failure to reach the required standard it might be a greater financial success than Circular 1421, and would raise the standard of secondary education instead of lowering it.

Broomcroft, Ford Lane, Didsbury. SHENA D. SIMON.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—While greatly in sympathy with your public-spirited exposure of the true significance of Circular 1421, I should like to register a protest against your attack on the suggestion of a "means test" for the parents of secondary school children. It appears that the writer is very slow to appreciate the almost intolerable burden of taxation to-day; and since it is common knowledge that hundreds of parents, with incomes ranging from £200 to £300 per annum, are gaining full education for their children entirely free of any cost or sacrifice whatsoever, it seems a duty to indicate that this is more than unfair to the taxpayer, who can ill-afford, even should he wish, to be so munificent.

It is surely true that most parents will be willing, when pressed, to make the just sacrifice for the adequate education of their children; it is to compel those with less unselfish principles, however, to comply with a just standard of education for the young that this provision of a "means test" has been introduced.

12 Portsdown Avenue, N.W.11. R. A. WITHERS.

[We should like secondary education to be a free social service, as it has now become in France. Failing this, there is no objection to a "means test" provided that the limit is not placed at so low a figure that children are deprived of education because of poverty. Circular 1421 will certainly have that effect if confirmed. It discourages education: we want to encourage it. —ED., *N.S. & N.*]

THE INDEPENDENT THEATRE CLUB

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Growing up at your very feet, at the Kingsway Theatre next door to your offices, is an institution called the Independent Theatre Club, founded with the avowed and expressed object of producing nothing but plays that have been banned (or that would be banned) by the British Censor.

It is an easy assumption, of course, that such plays must consist chiefly of personalities and pornography. In the first play that is to open at the Kingsway in about ten days time, Emil Ludwig's *Versailles*, it is true, I believe, that the venerable figures of Clemenceau, President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George are to face the footlights. But from the later plays of the intended programme—the celebrated American religious play, *Green Pastures*, M. Savoir's *Lui* (the play about the man who imagines that he is God), a contemplated play about modern Russia, and so forth—it seems to me that the Independent Theatre is simply claiming the right to deal seriously and freely with questions of Politics, Religion and Sex.

The Independent Theatre will differ from the Stage Society (which is also Censor-free) in that it proposes to run plays not only for a couple of performances but for three weeks or so each; the best professional company available will be engaged; and the whole of the production will be in the hands of one of the first men of the theatre of Europe, Komisarjevsky. I feel that the venture deserves the attention of your readers. It must often have seemed ludicrous to them that the entire British theatre-going public should be content to play the child to one man's nursemaid—the Censor's—and be told by his arbitrary decision what they may or may not go to hear discussed.

75 Marsham Street, Westminster. HUBERT GRIFFITH.

THE FILM INSTITUTE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—By the recent decision of Parliament whereby a part of the profits made by cinemas on Sundays are to be set aside for "the development of the cinematograph as a means of entertainment and instruction" funds are now available towards the establishment of the Film Institute recommended by the Commission on Educational and Cultural Films, and discussed by Mr. Lambert in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION a few weeks ago. The Government has made it clear, however, that any such grant will only be made if it is satisfied that the scheme in its final form is both adequate and workable; and the Commission is now, we are given to understand, conferring with representatives of the film trade in the hope of inducing them to agree to such a scheme.

The central problem involved is that of *control*—what body (with or without the co-operation of others) will actually, in practice, exercise the major direction of the Institute, if and when it is created?

In so far as the Commission's conclusions and recommendations deal with two matters on which its members, as eminent educationists, have expert knowledge and wide experience—namely, films for use in schools and films for use in classes and lectures for adults—they carry great weight. The two chapters in their Report embodying these conclusions, these recommendations, are indubitably authoritative. If these educationists are agreed that some kind of central *educational* organisation is desirable for the development of such school and lecture films, and for keeping in touch with similar educational bodies on the Continent and in America, they are no doubt right—in any case I would not presume to express an opinion.

When they go beyond, far beyond, these two specialised matters and attempt to survey the whole range of the entire film world—production, distribution, exhibition, Censorship, the Quota Act, the feature film, the artistic film, the news film and all the rest—I must confess I am more dubious. I find it a little difficult to believe that they have any more knowledge or experience on these matters than the rest of us. Certainly, they have less than the professional producers and distributors, the Board of Censors, the professional film critics, and those commercially disinterested bodies like the Empire Marketing Board which have studied these problems for years. Certainly, they have no more than many private individuals who have for years been deeply interested in the development of the cinema.

That the Commission have, in fact, discussed these matters and made their recommendations regarding them, not as experts at all (as in the case of the school and lecture films), but as amateurs is clear from an examination of the eight chapters in their Report in which they deal with them. The chapter on the Censorship, for example, is an extraordinary jumble of out-of-date and therefore misleading statistics, on the one hand, and academic generalisations altogether divorced from reality, on the other. I would readily give chapter and verse if I had space.

There has been a great deal of muddled thinking on this whole matter. *Either* we need an educational Institute to supervise the development of films for schools, films for lectures, etc.; in which case it is entirely appropriate that a group of distinguished educationists should make certain recommendations in regard to it, and exercise a large measure of control over it when it has been set up. *Or* we need a National Film Institute responsible for the whole of the enormous cinematograph field; in which case recommendations of educationists carry no more weight than those of any other body of equally limited experience, and the control must be at once far wider and far more expert than any so far proposed.

If the Commission say that they have suggested (as they have) that the control should not be exercised by any one group, but shared between three—the educators, the trade and the Government departments concerned—I would reply (1) that, in practice, this would mean that the effective control would rest with *one* of these groups, and, almost certainly—since neither the trade nor the Government departments would wish for any such control unless the whole scheme were radically altered (if then)—with the first; and (2) that, in any case, the control should not rest with any of the three groups mentioned, or even with a precariously balanced combination of two or three of them, but with the public at large. The trade must obviously be represented; the Government departments will probably insist, as a condition of a grant from the fund, on being represented. But the main representation should come from the community at large. Teachers and other educational experts, as one small but important section of that community, might well claim a small part of that representation. But to suggest that they can speak for the whole nation is preposterous.

The first and most urgent thing, therefore, is to make up our minds which of the two Institutes, if either, we really need. If it is a limited educational Institute, by all means let the Commission of educational experts continue to work for its establishment. If it is a National Film Institute on a large scale and with wide powers, the whole proposal needs reconsidering on that basis; and it must be made an absolute condition that, when created, it shall represent not one section of the community, but the nation as a whole.

WALTER ASHLEY.

Kingsway House, W.C.2

THE BACKWARD TRIBES OF INDIA

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—What is going to be done for the Backward Tracts in India? I ask this because I hear from India that the Central Provinces Franchise Committee recommended two seats for the Hill and Forest tribes, and it appears that this allotment has been cut down in the Prime Minister's award to one seat. In British India, the problem of the Backward Tracts arises in varying degrees of intensity in Bombay, Madras, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, Assam, as well as the Central Provinces, where no Backward Tracts were recognised. Yet yearly 20 per cent. of the present population of the Central Provinces consists of backward tribes, and tribal religions are recorded for 87.2 per mille. The facts are insistent and decisive. In 1921 the Census showed a total of something over 16 millions in British India. The Simon Commission put them at 11½ millions, using a different basis of computation. As things are to-day they form a definite element in the Indian population.

The "Untouchables" are constantly recruited from the hill and forest tribes, some of whom have shown signs of political consciousness and have fostered the purification of tribal religion from within. Others are worked by Christian missions with some success. Others—perhaps the majority—move more and more towards Hinduism. We are told Hinduism does not proselytise, but it is actively acquisitive. Its numbers are kept up by accessions from the hill and forest tribes and by the superior fertility of the depressed classes which to a considerable extent consist of groups which quite recently were definitely tribal groups. Hinduism has been described as magic tempered by metaphysics; it is also metaphysics tainted by magic, because its converts bring their traditional ideas and their tribal deities into the common stock and pass their colour through the whole polity. The lower influences the higher.

In the economic field there are many degrees of backwardness. Some hill tribes are far superior to many Indian peasants in economic capacity, intelligence and adaptability. Valuable service was done in the war by hillmen from Assam in the depots on the Lines of Communication. At Jamshedpur, with its modern and intelligent organisation, the "junglis have risen on their merits to good pay."

Clearly enough they can learn, but the right sort of education must be given to them and this should be based on their tribal lore, which is full of shrewdness and practicability. They need protection against the lawyer and the money-lender just as the Punjabi needed it and has it still. The Simon Commission saw and stated their problem fairly, and as a solution suggested that the Central Government should be responsible for, and actively promote, their education. What is happening?

The hill and forest folk are numerous enough to deserve consideration. They are important, because they are moving into and refreshing the ranks of Hinduism. They are full of potential value and are an integral element in the dynamics of the Indian polity.

T. C. HODSON,
Late Indian Civil Service,
Professor of Social Anthropology.

University Museum of Archæology and Ethnology, Cambridge.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Many lovers of peace who are impatient with the present situation will sympathise with Mr. Kellett's impatience, but he and they should not forget that the task of the practical pacifist is to-day two-fold: first to establish and to confirm popular support for the League as an institution, and secondly to carry on propaganda for a sound foreign policy. The League, unlike many other political institutions, was formed by a stroke of the pen and not as the result of a long political struggle. In consequence the public has to be "educated up" to the League when the League is already an accomplished fact, and those who are engaged in this work know only too well how great is the need for it.

For this task the League of Nations Union, founded on a non-party basis and enjoying the support of every section of the community including Royalty, is eminently fitted and would be handicapped if it undertook more controversial propaganda.

Propaganda for a sound foreign policy belongs to bodies such as the National Peace Council, the Women's International League, and, of course, the political parties. It is often said that the League of Nations should not be the subject of party

controversy, and this is doubtless a wise opinion. But the country's foreign policy, being no longer confined to the irresponsible direction of the Foreign Office, has become a matter of immediate moment to the ordinary elector, who should seek to make his influence felt through the ballot box in this as in domestic issues.

Do not then let us blame the League of Nations Union for doing what it is neither intended nor fitted to do. Let us all support it as the instrument by which acceptance of the League as an institution can become general. But those of us who believe that something more than this is necessary and who are alarmed at the foreign policy of the present Government can find other bodies through which to exert their influence.

119 Barlow Moor Road, Didsbury, Manchester. LEONARD F. BEHRENS.

THE *TIMES* COAT OF ARMS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I am honoured by your reference to me in your issue of October 1st. I hasten to inform you, however, that I was approached by the responsible authority with a view to my engraving a new coat of arms to accompany the new Roman title of the *Times* and I decided it was not my job. May I explain briefly?

1. When you consider the nature of modern life, modern religion, politics, arts and manufactures it is clear that the mediaeval business of shields and emblems has no proper place. Such things have degenerated into either family or institutional snobbery or into sentimentality and blindness to the real state of things. The display of a coat of arms (or even a crest) to-day proclaims a romantic or a snob.

2. But because I don't want to be a prig, even in the cause of reason, I am quite willing to undertake the carving or engraving of heraldic devices, as a job and to order. Here a fresh set of difficulties arises. You cannot make a good pair of boots for a committee. The only thing you can make well when you are up against a group of varying minds is something measurable, something patient of statement in defined terms. How can you state or define the expression of a lion's nose? And it is just such things which make the difference between the living and the dead.

The success of an engraving depends upon the sensibility and good sense of the artist and upon his freedom (i.e., responsibility). When the artist is in the position to deal with a personal customer there is fair give and take. The needs of the one and the knowledge and sensibility of the other are more or less amicably combined. But when the customer is not a person and when, in addition, this impersonal customer wants something which the artist thinks rather silly and out of date, then the job had better be turned down.

In the case of the *Times* coat of arms there were too many people to be pleased and not enough reason for pleasing them.

But I do want it to be clear that the blame, if any, is mine, not theirs; they did ask me and I refused.

High Wycombe. ERIC GILL.

"MIRACLE AT VERDUN"

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I should like very strongly to endorse Mrs. Basil Hall's comment on your film critic's notice of *Miracle at Verdun*. It was disconcerting to find THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, of all journals, treating so fine an achievement of the human imagination as a mere piece of emotional pretentiousness, and its critic apparently alone in his curious inability to perceive any literary merit in a production of such outstanding importance. His conclusion that the play "lacked all shape" must certainly have been affected by the fact that he left before the end, since the final rounding-off of the design occurs in the last few sentences. VERA BRITTAIN.

19 Glebe Place, S.W.3.

FEMALE PLAICE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—"Critic" has found in his weekly travels some wonderful bunches of carrots, but in this week's issue one of his bunches are, *mirabile dictu*, not carrots at all! Not once has an old master been found in a rubbish heap where owing to its surroundings it was regarded as worthless. Dr. Bidder's (D.Sc.) paper found by "Critic" in the rubbish of a Provincial paper was taken from the British Medical Journal of September 24th. . . .

We are so entirely accustomed to regard old age and death as universal in nature, that we are apt to forget that life itself never dies. The "vital spark" is handed on, that one cell, invisible to the naked eye, is all we get from the past and all we give the future. . .

The male plaice grows to a few (5 or 6) pounds' weight and then dies.

Plaice (like cock and hen pheasants) do not pair, but *the female* goes on growing and has been found twelve times the normal weight and twice the normal length. This corresponds to a woman of about 10 or 11ft. high and 120 stone weight! Nothing but accident seems to end the life of the female plaice!

Rathmore, Elgin. FRED GOURLAY, M.D.

Miscellany

THE WATERFALL

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL INCIDENT.

THE following adventure, easily the most vivid of many childish recollections, does not figure in my autobiography *Impressions that Remained*, because the author-friend on whom I inflicted the early chapters of the M.S. inquired if I really imagined any publisher would print such an anecdote?

The scene was Paris, 1917; and as this victim of a budding author's ruthlessness was on three days' leave from the front, at first I believed he must be suffering from shell shock; and so did two intelligent and literary women of our acquaintance: "Comment!" they cried "vous voulez qu'elle supprime cette histoire délicieuse! . . . si essentiellement anglaise, si drôle, si innocente! et puis si *jolie!!*"

But the face of the Englishman (his name was M—ce B—g) assumed a mulish expression well known to his friends, and he went on quietly repeating "It must be cut out." And cut out it was.

Last summer I told the story to a group of dashing, up-to-date, equally literary but *English* experts. All scoffed at the idea of its shocking anyone nowadays; such prudery was a thing of the past, they said.

I thought to myself at the time "*I wonder*"? And to-day more than ever do I wonder, remembering the recent case of a Polish Count who gave rein to an apparently irresistible passion for certain monosyllabic words: good strong Anglo-Saxon words which, however, are seldom met with in polite letters. The publisher not only returned his poems with horror, but thought well to communicate with the police; and presently these judges of literature were escorting the poet to prison.

We of Puritan extraction are careful to lock up in our bosoms any hair-raising monosyllables that come our way. Yet at this moment the thought of that guileless foreigner haunts and daunts me a little; so does a picture by Gilray—or is it H. B.?—showing a female of unprepossessing appearance seated in the stocks, so ran the legend, for having used language ill becoming a lady. And I do so want to attend a "Court" disguised as a Doctor of Music. The robes are gorgeous and ritually quite correct according to the Lord Chamberlain's Office. . . .

It's no use; I simply cannot keep this thing to myself! Risk or no risk, consequences or no consequences, here's the story.

* * *

Like most little girls I envied boys on many counts, but chiefly for a costume which does away with difficulties and dangers that embitter the lives of their athletic sisters. How blessed to climb trees without risk of finding yourself suspended in mid air by your sash; to jump wheelbarrows and not catch your toe in a hem; to crawl through hedges and never get stuck half way because of your petticoats;

to fall head over heels without the added humiliation of what our French governesses called making an *exposition* of yourself! Altogether, how wonderful must be a life in which hooks and eyes, strings and pins play no part: a life solidly based on buttons!

At this point one thought of various matters; of occasions when, nature being nature, things have to be done secretly and swiftly; O how simple merely to . . .

Stop; that's not a safe road to travel. Better make a fresh start.

* * *

In my memoirs I spoke of our passion for dressing up; also of our box of *grandeurs* (pronounced *grandjers*), consisting of old ball dresses, wreaths, and spangles of my mother's, military oddments of my father's—false beards, feathers, and so on. Well; one cold autumn day in the holidays, looking as like Fenimore Cooper's Indians as these rather sophisticated "properties" allowed, out we rushed, war-whooping, into the garden.

Now the fancy dress on which I had set my heart was one of my brother's suits. He was 12, I only eight, and the idea was unfavourably received as derogatory to the dignity of a male wardrobe. But eventually, tricked out with a gold-braided Horse Artillery forage cap and a crimson sash, I was graciously permitted to be a Bush Policeman and told to look alive.

My duties were turn about to hide in the shrubbery and dash out in pursuit of Indians; but all too soon came the moment when nice-minded little girls explain they have left their pocket-handkerchief up at the house and will be back directly. Not so this Bush Policeman. Here at last was a chance of testing the greatest of all advantages conferred by male attire; had I not often seen my brother disappear behind a tree . . . to emerge almost immediately, gazing aloft as though looking for birds' nests? . . . The Red Indian game seemed slacking off . . . there was no time to be lost . . . I nipped into the shrubbery. . . .

O horror! Midway in a devastating experience that proved the difference between dreams and realities, came shouts of "Ethel! quick, quick! collect wood! We're going to build a wigwam," and simultaneously the tramp of approaching feet! . . . All but caught in a shocking situation, too flustered to invent an excuse for bolting up to the house, condemned to stand in misery for the rest of that icy afternoon handing boughs to my elders, I think the severest moralist will allow that, far from fitting the crime, the punishment was several sizes too large for it.

The deed was never discovered; in such cases the ingenuity of the young is limitless. But, incredible as it seems in a country-bred child, not till some years later did I grasp why this gallant experiment was foredoomed to failure! Children can be very unobservant, and such was the case with me.

* * *

How dark it has got! Is that you, Polish Count, in the corner? . . . and that odd-looking object near the fire, is it the stocks, or only one of those T-shaped foot-rests beloved of the gouty? . . . And you, dim but resplendent vision in knee-breeches, a queer-shaped peaky hat tucked under your arm? . . . Mercy on us! You must be, *you are*, the Lord Chamberlain! . . .

Avaunt phantoms, or rather come out into the open, Polish Count, Lord Chamberlain, and gouty foot-rest! I defy the lot of you. Of course, people can read anything they choose into words, but unless you tamper with mine I defy you to make clear to the jury what, exactly, happened that day in the garden at Sidcup Place, Footscray, Kent. And to avoid possible misapprehensions I will only add what perhaps should have been said sooner, that the spot chosen for our wigwam was just where a little stream runs guggling through the rhododendrons and down the bank into the pond. And that is the reason—the sole reason—why this story is called *The Waterfall*. ETHEL SMYTH.

DAYBREAK IN THE TROPICS

GREY as the banks of mud on which they tilt
Their armoured heads, the alligators smile,
Alternately disclosing greed and guile
While staring at the thickly-moving silt.
And when the suffocating night has gone,
Discovered by the dawn in quick surprise,
They blink the shutters of their gilded eyes
And turn and plunge into the Amazon.

Feeling the sun's incendiary hand
Ignite the densely vegetated land
Parrots and brilliant parrakeets emerge;
And leaving their green palaces and domes
They scream across the forest's leafy verge
Like fugitives forsaking stricken homes.

YVONNE FFRENCH.

THE SENSE OF THE PAST

THERE must be trepidation in Elysium when his date of centenary arrives for a shade, when, on the pretext of an accidental anniversary, the living call him to a kind of secular judgment day. Will he return to the asphodels with increase or decrease of glory? The chance is not easy to calculate. If the vital world at the time is blown with self-sufficiency, the most distinguished ghost may be sent packing back because his fame gives no encouragement to prevailing foibles. But to a world at the moment extenuate and weak of will the revisitant must offer just the right sort of fillip, or he may lose his laurels. Auguste Manet has profited in this second manner by the hundredth celebration of his birth.

When he died in 1883 it is quite likely that he joined in the general opinion that he had been a failure, in spite of the diverse championship of Baudelaire, Zola, and Mallarmé. His life had been a continuous labour, barely cheered by the scantiest official success. And it is characteristic of him that the lack of such success was a disappointment, for he was bourgeois of the bourgeois and without a spark of arrivisme. The award of a few medals could work such wonders. It could convince the public that he had no desire to shock them; it could reconcile his parents to his having become a painter. Then, with the Republic and the family on his side, his existence might be more prosperous and less tentative. How, indeed, he lived, in the intimate sense of the term, is still mysterious, in spite of the present-day searchlight upon the private affairs of the famous. He remains shy and vague, and keeps his secrets. In his youth he went to South America on a training ship, which gives his biographers their only excuse for a little colourful, but not illuminating, writing. Afterwards he engaged on a liaison, which drifted quietly into marriage, with a placid Dutch lady, who taught him the piano, and for years, with superfluous caution, he passed off his son as his brother-in-law. The biographers, gazing at his portraits of women belonging to every kind of Parisian world, conjecture vainly; that obscurity remains discreet. Beyond his passion for concerts, his visits to foreign galleries, and his work, all else is indistinct.

He triumphed within a month of his death. Against expectations, the sale of the pictures in his studio was a success. The painter of *Olympia*, the bogy of the Beaux-Arts, rapidly became a national glory, handed over to a second, and even more hazardous, existence in men's memories. Though at last he attained the consecration of national galleries, he has known neglect as well. The post-impressionists, and especially Cézanne, captured more recent ardours, and Manet, still a master in reputation, was no longer one in practice.

But the luck of centenary has coincided with the exhaus-

tion of Cézanne's and, arising out of him, the Cubists' influence. It is opportune that attention should be turned towards Manet at a time when contemporary art has reached the end of a cycle, and is in danger of sterility and lack of direction. For he faced the same problems and found a solution which to-day is not without pertinence. He looked for support to tradition, but he saw that particular sections of tradition may be for the time outworn as influences, and that the time may be ripe to seek afresh. And he saw that imitation is never in itself sufficient, but must be invested with a contemporary sense.

Thus, from work which relied considerably upon its suggestions from the past, he grew to a form of representation which can only be called instantaneous. Where the old masters aimed at a permanence and a summing-up of experience in the representation they gave of their subject, Manet viewed the time-indication of his canvas as something fugitive and only just within the bounds of capture, time for him being not an accumulation but a continuous effacement. All his study was towards conveying a sense of the present, a labour giving the effect of improvisation, a deliberate rendering of the accidental and evanescent. The result was the wonderful series of pictures, particularly the women's portraits and the river scenes, wholly without any burden of good or evil, because the intensity with which the subject fulfilled its single instant of time banished all other preoccupation but that of its existence alone. It is the highest and the purest art, approaching the absolute in an effort towards a reality too fine for perception. At present it is especially salutary as an example, since contemporary art is turning for a stimulus away from pattern and towards representation again.

T. W. EARP.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Slings and Arrows

MR. RODNEY ACKLAND is a young playwright who has already displayed such admirable qualities of judgment and imagination that one is entitled to deplore the embarrassing naivetés of *Strange Orchestra* at the St. Martin's Theatre. It is difficult to be interested in people whose adolescent yearnings have been prolonged to an age when the average man or woman has assimilated the fact that life is real and earnest and has ceased to discuss that in public. In the flat owned by Vera Lyndon, one of those slatternly and large-souled women who combine moral sloppiness with a rich humanity, is assembled a collection of people, all of whom, groping for happiness in the pauses of their work, experience incidental discomfort or disaster. Jenny goes blind as well as being deceived by her lover; Esther is torn with pity for little dumb animals; Freda is abandoned; Gordon is entangled with a "spurious" houri; Val is unable to perceive the meaning of life, and two young lovers seek to crystallise for ever their perfect moment by turning on the gas. Here's richness for one household! According to Jenny, the moral is that "one must cope with life"; but it is difficult to make of so nebulous a duty the theme of a play. The author's attempt to heighten his tragedy by noisy proof that, whatever happens, life goes on, is too crude to be successful. It is impossible to believe that even a Bright Young Person like George would play his ukulele when so many ships were going down. The portrait of the sensual, tolerant lady, magnificently played by Miss Laura Cowie, who illumines the action by her coarsely understanding comment, shows that Mr. Ackland has not lost his sense of character. The rest of the cast do not make much of their misfortunes.

Nothing Too Much

It is a real achievement to avoid writing a tract in treating of the familiar struggle in the mind of a woman who wants to combine marriage with a career. Miss Florida Pier has no battle-cry about the mission of women in modern life. In *Many Women*, at the Arts Theatre, she is concerned rather to indicate, with the resigned gesture of the artist, that there is no ease either for the feminist or for the woman at home. Everything, she points out, depends on the circumstances. Kate, the central figure of the play, has to give up her florist's shop when she finds she is neglecting her home; on the other hand, Natasha, exotic creature of passion, realises that she has nothing to fall back upon when she is deserted by her lover. The hard and efficient young Nina ought never to have married at all, but poor deprived Lump needed a large family of children. The only connecting link between these diverse people is their common work in a grower's nursery. The characters are excellently observed. Nina's touching, inarticulate little husband, admirably played by Mr. Peter Ridgeway, is painfully true to life, and Nina and Lump, if presented with occasional exaggeration, are truthfully conceived. Even the stormy Natasha of Miss Olga Lindo is more than a piece of good theatre. But the author's impartiality has its dangers. The very feeling for the variety and richness of life, which would have enabled her to make of this theme a good novel, has made her play undramatic.

"One More River"

Some rather wearisome eccentricities of production tend to obscure the merits of Mr. Ashley Duke's social comedy, *One More River*, now presented, somewhat late in the day, at the Gate Theatre. This is unfortunate because the new "cartel" which is thus inaugurated between Messrs. Peter Godfrey and Terence Gray promises to be particularly interesting. But there is in the production an element of caprice and singularity, which is likely to puzzle and distract far more people than it will amuse. In any case, *One More River*, with its Elizabethan technique and blank verse adapted to a modern, semi-fantastic theme, deserves a less disturbing treatment. Our interest in the hotel which is "A resting place between the *nisi* and the absolute" struggles hard to survive a series of rather dull jokes in costume, gesture and make-believe properties. The producer, whose *nom de guerre* is Quetzalcoatl, defends himself, not without protestation, in the programme. But however much he agrees with the theory, the theatregoer who knows the play's text is likely to be disappointed with a practice which sacrifices so much to achieve so little.

An Oxford Film

Men of To-morrow (at the Plaza), directed by Leontine Sagan, the creator of *Mädchen in Uniform*, deals with the appalling dangers of going to Oxford. A poetically minded young man, on whose walls hangs a plaster head of Beethoven, has his rooms wrecked by a drunken gang of rowing men. As a result of this fracas the poetically minded young man is sent down. Broken by misery, he retires to a lodging house, where, overwrought and underfed, he produces a "brilliant" and "daring" novel of Oxford life, on which he returns to Oxford and is welcomed by the Dons, who point out that the stones of the Sheldonian theatre are five hundred years old and too wise to take things personally. Fraulein Sagan has collected some quite attractive young people of both sexes, and, with the aid of clever photography and some amusing dialogue, has produced a very agreeable film, which pleases the eye while it exasperates the intelligence. This picture is the film version of an Oxford novel. There is something about the mentality of Oxford men which will always be a mystery to other people.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:

Friday, October 7th—
Philharmonic Society, Queen's Hall, 8.15.
"Children in Uniform," Duchess Theatre.
"Peer Gynt," Festival Theatre, Cambridge.
Sir Arthur Salter on "Disarmament," B.B.C., 9.20.

Saturday, October 8th—
British Women's Symphony Orchestra, Queen's Hall, 3.
Arthur Rubinstein, Grotrian Hall, 3.15.

Sunday, October 9th—
Prof. J. C. Flugel on "Human Capacities in the Light of Modern Psychology," Conway Hall, 11.
Ballet Club reopens, Ladbroke Road, W., 9.
"Spacetime Inn," Arts Theatre.

Monday, October 10th—
Courtauld-Sargent Concert, Queen's Hall, 8.15.
"Service," Wyndham's Theatre.

Tuesday, October 11th—
Dr. C. Kuangson Young on "China in the Modern World," Friends' House, 1.20.
"Alison's House," Little Theatre.

Wednesday, October 12th—
Van Gogh Exhibition opens, Manchester City Art Gallery.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

MR. DUFF COOPER is a man of culture, determination, and ability. He is also a man of the world. He knows that brilliance unsupported by scholarship is but a feckless thing; he is also aware that knowledge uninformed by imagination is a lump of dough. Yet this is not the only lesson which Mr. Duff Cooper has acquired during twenty years of life and letters. He has evolved a peculiar technique, an original recipe, for blending his fluids with his solids. He knows how to create in the minds of his auditors a pleasurable alternation between incertitude and assurance, between anxiety and relief. "Surely," we exclaim at one moment, "this is much too clever to be true!" "Yet, after all," we remark a few minutes later, "Duff Cooper knows his facts." It is not that he obtrudes his learning. Far from it. He treats his scholarship with patrician reserve. He is, for instance, a master of the French language. Does he boast of this attainment? Never for a moment. The "J'ai vécu" of the Abbé Sieyes becomes for this modest Englishman "I lived." This is doubly reassuring. We are soothed in the first place by this absence of ostentation; and in the second place we gain the impression of vast continents of other knowledge similarly undisclosed. It is by this mingling of precision with light-heartedness that Mr. Duff Cooper can hold the Mother of Parliaments spellbound for seventy minutes while he talks to her about the Army Estimates. He does not glance at his notes; but the notes are there: he holds them in his younger statesman hand. Even thus, in his biography of Talleyrand (Cape, 12s. 6d.), does Mr. Duff Cooper mingle vitality with erudition, epigram with fact. It is not, it does not pretend to be, a work of original research. But it is, and deliberately, a work of interpretation and of art. Let me examine this biography, not as a contribution to history, but solely as a contribution to literature.

* * *

Mr. Duff Cooper, when at Oxford, used to write poetry. It was not, perhaps, what might be called excellent poetry, but it was, in the full meaning of the phrase, "très honorable." Since then Mr. Duff Cooper has devoted to military, civil, and Parliamentary service his highly honourable gifts. It is fitting, however, that he should at the present stage of his career remind his many admirers that he can write as well as talk. The House of Commons do not really resent intelligence provided that its possessor does not take it seriously. Few of Mr. Duff Cooper's colleagues will be permanently estranged by the high literary capacity which his *Talleyrand* displays. On the contrary, they will appreciate its sturdy conservatism, they will relish the sly analogies which are drawn. His wit, also, is in the best tradition. Sir Philip Francis, for instance, is not (and with good reason) the sort of person that any decent Tory likes. Mr. Duff Cooper is very unkind to Sir Philip Francis:

> Mr. Grand brought an action, obtained large damages, pocketed his money, and returned his wife to her parents. Sir Philip, however, persuaded her to come back to him, and for a year lodged her under the same roof as Lady Francis, whom he persuaded that their relations were purely platonic—a feat in comparison to which the authorship of the letters of Junius sinks into insignificance.

I question, none the less, whether the members of the National Government will read with unbounded exhilaration Mr. Duff Cooper's analysis of the Directory, its composition, and attainments. So incisive an analysis cuts to the bone. Yet, since the whole theme of the book is a defence of inconsistency, there will be many among his front-bench colleagues who will be grateful to Mr. Duff Cooper for his fine and subtle advocacy. Almost he convinces one that in times of unrepresentative government disloyalty becomes a patriotic duty. I repeat, however, that it is not my purpose to treat of the historical and political aspects of this volume. I wish to discuss it in its relation to modern biographical tendencies.

* * *

The art of biography flourishes best during those transitional periods between one convention and the next. A generally accepted formula, such as the Victorian formula, concentrates attention, not upon the individual but upon the type, upon the synthetic rather than upon the analytical. With the inevitable reaction against a formula which has lost general acceptance, comes a concentration of interest upon those elements in personality which differ from the type rather than upon those elements which conform to it. This reaction against conventional values produces a desire for the scientific rather than the religious treatment of character, and with it a preference for the actual, as opposed to the fictional. In responding to this increased popular requirement, the writers and publishers of biographies have tended of late to emphasise the personal at the expense of the typical, the vivid at the expense of the real. Our portraits tend more and more to become picturesque, our themes discontinuous. We are so stimulated by the eccentric that we abandon all sense of unity or union. Our biographers are losing the capacity for composition, and the art of biography is ceasing to be an art and is becoming a pastime. It is for this reason that Mr. Duff Cooper's book on Talleyrand will be welcomed with relief. As a portrait it is as vivid as the most exacting could require. It is also beautifully composed. Most modern biographers are so terrified of hagiography, so alarmed by the didactic, that they teach us nothing and leave us unsatisfied or confused. Mr. Duff Cooper has his thesis; it gives to his work both continuity and composition, and it leaves the reader with the conviction that he has not only been entertained but has acquired a point of view. What are the more specific qualities which render this book so satisfactory?

* * *

Its main quality, to my mind, is that it is written throughout from the intellectual rather than from the ethical or sensational standpoint. Mr. Duff Cooper is not concerned whether Talleyrand was, or was not, a virtuous man. He records the many defects of his hero with scientific detachment. Nor is he concerned with the dramatic or sensational elements in Talleyrand, although each of these elements emerges automatically from the story. He is concerned predominantly with the problem whether Talleyrand was or was not an opportunist, and he contends that throughout his career, and in spite of his apparent contradictions, runs a thread of determined consistency, a constant principle of action. It is this insistence upon an interesting and quite tenable thesis which gives to Mr. Duff Cooper's book an element of purpose and construction. The reader is so conscious of a firm architectural plan, of a constant point of view, that the quirks and epigrams of Mr. Duff Cooper become as ornaments to a wholly serious frontage. We have had so many biographies of late which are brilliant and amusing; it is a relief to find one which is sensible as well. In the second place Mr. Duff Cooper treats the English language with respect. In the balance of his periods one catches an echo of the greater periods of English prose, whereas his deft, sharp phrases have all the nimbleness of modernity. Here again he fuses what is best in the traditional with what is best in recent innovation. And in the third place Mr. Duff Cooper has a perfect gift of selection. He has woven his tangled material into a tissue of silken smoothness. Not a strand is knotted; not a strand is loose. If biography is to be defined as "the history of an individual conceived as a work of art," then Mr. Duff Cooper's book should serve as an exhibit. It is historical in that it conveys the proportions of events; it describes an individual, since it concentrates on character; and it is, without question, a deliberate work of art.

HAROLD NICOLSON.

NEW NOVELS

August. By KNUT HAMSUN. Cassell. 8s. 6d.

Trinc. By FRANCIS WATSON. Dickson. 7s. 6d.

Mutinous Wind. By ROBERT SPEAIGHT. Davies. 7s. 6d.

The House Under the Water. By FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG. Heinemann. 8s. 6d.

Inflections, 1931. By JAMES CLEUGH. Secker. 7s. 6d.

Fugitive Morning. By LESLIE A. PAUL. Archer. 7s. 6d.

Death to the French. By C. S. FORESTER. Lane. 7s. 6d.

I have no desire to compare Mr. Francis Watson's *Trinc* with Mr. Knut Hamsun's *August:* it would be like comparing a butterfly with a hawk. But there are certain virtues in the latter which any writer of light comedy might take to heart. August is a picaresque rogue whose attempts to impose American standards and methods of living on the little fishing village of Polden result disastrously for Polden and for himself. August is full of self-confidence, a braggart and a liar, who arrives in Polden with a sterile cargo of tinned goods; and all his actions and all his supposed gifts to his native village prove equally sterile. He manages to bamboozle people into buying Polden's land for building until Polden has nothing to live on, the buildings being non-productive and the land having been very much so. He starts an illegal bank and the shareholders, and others, merely borrow from it until all is gone. Opposed to him is the symbolical character of Ezra, the one landsman who holds his land and thereby avoids the worst rigours of the famine that visits the village as a result of August's patronage. We enjoy August, however, enjoy his roguery and his lies, and his amazing yarns, his shifts and escapades. We enjoy him because he is real; and the comedy gains by the grimness of the reality behind it.

For good comedy never cheats reality; poor comedy postpones it until the last minute of the last act; bad comedy forgets it entirely. Mr. Watson may be juxtaposed to Hamsun only because he is an example of the comedy that cheats reality throughout. His young American girl and his London architect who rediscover Panurge and Pantagruel via a tunnel under Chinon are about as real as a Bloomsbury tea-party. They say many things that are sufficiently witty and pert, pass many apt comments on the twentieth century, air their views on books, architecture, music, politics, sex—there is plenty of sex in *Trinc*—but the instant a real emotion crops up they kill it off at once, as if in sheer terror of reality, with a cynical jest. If it were Mr. Huxley or Mr. Shaw one would laugh and read on, knowing that reality would avenge itself on wit in due course. But the smart set novelaster never pays for his wit, and wit that costs nothing is merely undergraduate facetiousness. So one wearies of it. Inevitably the pair of Pan-worshippers leave Panurge and have to return to dear old, foggy, flatty London. At the sight they weep, for who wants to go to bed, safely married, in a flat? "What," they say, "is to be done now? Fight against inertia and apathetic suburbanism?" What amazing muddle-headedness to oppose free-love in France to "inertia and apathy" in Highgate! I trust I have not been breaking a butterfly on a wheel: but even a reviewer will turn.

One opens Mr. Robert Speaight's *Mutinous Wind* with interest, and engaged by the obvious seriousness of the effort to write soundly, one closes it with regret that the characters have proved so unreal. Surely any novelist should know better at this date than to make a hero called Julian Lovelace meet a heroine called Dolores, in Verona, woo her off Amalfi under the shadow of Cervellano, and lose her on an island called Isola d'Oro, named out of Poe? And the Lovelace house of Devoncourt! With its silver candelabra—shining, of course, on the old man's grey head—its bronze Hermes, its Diana fountain, its Dido and Aeneas staircase, its Cardinal's Closet for afternoon tea, its prie-dieu, and amethyst rosary, its portraits of people who have each and every one of them done something interesting—one wonders is the book a satire on itself? But there is another strain in the love of London and London scenes that gives one hope that Mr. Speaight will write something real when he has pruned away his "auroral splendours" and his "incarnadined seas," and his too-metaphorical language:

> He saw his life swung like a jewel in the embalmed Italian sky, lying in the lap of heaven and sustained on the aerial shoulders of fate!

The best thing in the book is an old, blowsy landlady.

Mr. Francis Brett Young's *The House Under the Water* would make a magnificent film. Its central dynamic character, Tregaron, with his outlandish temper, his suspicious mind, his sanguine self-sufficiency, his short, stocky, agile body, is just the romantic picturesque figure Stevenson would have loved to lay hands on. He inherits the eleven thousand acres of Forest Fawr, wood and mountain, and proceeds to ruin himself in trying to tame it. He makes a fortune in speculation and loses it. He sells his mountain as a mighty reservoir for a quarter of a million and sets about squandering it. He loses all his wealth in further investments and dies of a stroke brought on by having lived "excessively." And there is a whole background of lesser figures, his daughters and their wooers, his two sons and their ambitions, his wife Lucrezia, shut out from his heart, hiding her jealousy under her coldness. The scene in which the valley is dammed and the waters slowly rise above the fields and the nests of the things of the field, and laps its way inch by inch over the house of Nant Escob is a magnificent romantic episode. That there are faults in Mr. Brett Young's writing one cannot gainsay. It tends to be rather too oratorical at one moment, and too sedately leisurely at another. But if Mr. Brett Young only wrote always like this:

> At breakfast time it stopped snowing suddenly, just as if the sky had emptied itself; not a vestige of a cloud remained. The sun tipped the eastern wall of Dol Escob with flame; its splintered light sparkled from myriads of icy crystals till every snow-weighted bough seemed on fire. Beneath that pure fire smiled Dol Escob, flawlessly white; not a tree, not a rock had escaped the snow's orderly covering.

Inflections, 1931, by Mr. James Cleugh is at any rate an accomplished novel if a somewhat dreary and unpleasant one with its air of stale patchouli and rouge, and its atmosphere of sensuality. We are introduced to a sequence of groups, in London, Paris, Seville, and Berlin, all playing the sex-game and for the most part not quite clear as to what they are up to. There is certainly no sentimentality in this book, but it is doubtful if there is a trace of sentiment either. It is the price some moderns have paid for their fear of the delicate emotion. If one is interested in sexual mechanisms, however, and attributes to them the importance Mr. Cleugh feels they possess, this delineation of their workings cannot but seem interesting and significant.

It is a strange relief to turn from this rather arid cerebralism to Mr. Leslie Paul's *Fugitive Morning*. By no stretch of the imagination could this novel be classed as good literature. There is no sense of words in it, for although there are plenty of colourful, bright phrases and rhythmical sentences, every single one of them, the reader feels, has been used before in exactly the same collocation and association, for example:

> It was not that Elsa was a cynical woman of the streets; it was simply that her fundamental, warm animal self was thickly encrusted with fears, suspicions, and inhibitions, in part the gift of her environment, in part derived from her experiences of life. It was these encrustations that enabled her to pursue untroubled [. . . etc., etc.]

Yet I read this novel of a boy's growth from cover to cover with a quite indefensible interest. It is difficult to know who might be expected to read it unconscious of its faults; but if anyone can, he is in for an exciting experience. It is a kind of unsophisticated *Portrait of the Artist* with the addition of Ian Hay humour. Here again there is plenty of sex, but it is treated in a fresh, manly, animal fashion. One wishes one could have read this book as a boy and one wishes it with the same meaning as Arnold Bennett when he said that Broadway and its sky-signs at night would be heaven if one were only unable to read.

Death to the French is an effective novel of action placed in Portugal during the 1810 invasion by the French. It faintly suggests the *Exploits of Brigadier Gerard*, but this hero, Rifleman Dodds, is quite a realistic character, tough, courageous, heavy-going, the native hue of whose resolution is rarely sicklied o'er by the pale cast of thought. Mr. Forester suggests his qualities with admirable reticence. One admires, too, the author's sense of period, created by such methods as the careful description of the loading of a gun, but as one observes that it is quickly shattered by a reference to modern appurtenances of warfare, breaking the mood, one has to conclude that a sense of atmosphere is not Mr. Forester's strongest point. Could this have been added, the book, now good, might have become a striking historical pastiche.

SEÁN O'FAOLÁIN.

ELIZABETH SIDDAL

The Wife of Rossetti: Her Life and Death. By VIOLET HUNT. Lane. 18s.

Perhaps it was Rossetti's greatest achievement that he became a legend in his lifetime and after his death possessed the minds of those who had known him, and of many who had only heard tell of him, like the burden of an unforgettable song. Whatever the value of his art, his personality had a magnetism and a dynamism hard to parallel.

Round such a figure books were bound to accumulate. And accumulate they did, from the stop-press potboilers of Hall Caine and William Sharp to the detached and deliberate centennial monographs of Mr. R. L. Mégroz and Mr. Evelyn Waugh. Between those extremes came, among much of lesser importance, the *Memoir* by William Rossetti and the collections of documents to which that paragon of brothers devoted so much of his later years, Holman Hunt's monumental *Pre-Raphaelitism*, and the incidental revelations of Bell Scott and Allingham. But the story was never fully told.

Miss Violet Hunt has neither told it fully nor made claim to have done so. She is concerned with a particular aspect of it. But over William Rossetti and Holman Hunt she has one great advantage, besides the sense of humour which they both so conspicuously lacked. They, by temperament and according to the habit of their generation, were reticent men, observant of the Victorian taboos. In spite of their abundant detail they did not say, and made it plain that they were not saying, all that they knew. Miss Hunt writes after the more fearless newer fashion. She has no scruples in "brushing away the decent coverlet of leaves" under which the Victorian robins had hidden those desperate babes in the Pre-Raphaelite wood, Gabriel Rossetti and Elizabeth Siddal—and a golden-haired *tertium quid*.

Her credentials are excellent if not unexceptionable; as good, probably, as any that could to-day be produced. Long before she could understand its implications Lizzy's tragedy was an old, unhappy, far-off tale. She only saw Rossetti through a window-pane, when she was a young girl and he a shrouded recluse. Swinburne, it seems, Watts-Dunton would not allow her to meet; fearing, perhaps, too heady a stimulant for his still effervescent charge. But she knew most of the others most nearly concerned, and passed her youth in an atmosphere impregnated with the legend.

What she heard or overheard (or only guessed at) she has now set down, and if some of her statements are unexpected they will be for most too easily credible. For instance, that Lizzy was in love with poor Walter Deverell and that Gabriel had begun taking chloral before her death. The suicide was already accepted, but Miss Hunt can tell what Madox Brown knew and kept from the coroner. Fanny Cornforth or Hughes or Cox (by others called Schott) is accorded an appropriate substantiality, and the woman who, as William admitted, caused the breach between Gabriel and Hunt is given a personality and a name. Lizzy herself takes on a more definite reality.

Yet Miss Hunt is writing out of her memory of the memories of others, and where it can be tested her own at least may often be shown at fault. Thus it was Millais and not Rossetti (himself subsisting largely on borrowings) who at a critical moment lent Hunt the money which enabled him to continue painting; and Millais, not Rossetti, who could not trust himself to attend Deverell's funeral. Rossetti went. It was Bessie Parkes, not Arthur Hughes, who thought that Lizzy looked as if she read the Bible and said her prayers; and Mary Howitt, not her daughter, who was at the "Pre-Raphaelite crush" in 1861. Tensity, not tenacity, was what, rather than intensity, Patmore divined in Gabriel; and "angel-like," not "gracious," the epithet which Hughes coupled with "serene" for William. Seventeen years did not elapse between *The Germ* and the Oxford frescoes, and a meeting of the P.R.B. in January 1851 was hardly the anniversary of its foundation in September, 1848. Rossetti's first book of poems was not called *Poems and Ballads*, nor did Cuthbert Bede write *Plain or Ringlets*.

These are small matters, but they make it clear that as a record of facts Miss Hunt's book is to be accepted with caution. But it is a platitude that fact and truth are not the same; and I do not hesitate to believe that here for the first time the essential truth about one of the most tragic and extraordinary and fascinating of human couples has been told. Miss Hunt rejects not only William's "decent coverlet" but the sentimentalism of Lady Burne-Jones. She displays Rossetti, whom, like Browning, she can "never forgive," as selfish, sensual and unscrupulous. She exhibits the ethereal Ida in shrill, vituperative tantrums. But, sympathetic as witty, she robs neither of the charm which must have been a reality because it has worked so long and so potently. A connoisseur of the human heart, she has resolved the inconsistencies of personality into a brilliant imaginative synthesis, and told a story of poignant actuality and absorbing interest.

FRANCIS BICKLEY.

THE SHORT STORY IN ENGLAND

The English Review Book of Short Stories. Edited by HORACE SHIPP. Sampson Low. 8s. 6d.

Mr. Ford Madox Ford has contributed a preface to a collection of short stories made from the files of the *English Review*, in which, with his customary downrightness, he says many salutary things about the writing and selling of fiction. Indeed I am not sure that this preface is not the most worthwhile thing in the book, seeing that the best of the stories in it—Mr. Huxley's *The Gioconda Smile*, Miss Violet Hunt's *The Coach*, D. H. Lawrence's *Honour and Arms*, Mr. Galsworthy's *Virtue*, Mr. Ellis Roberts's *The Hill*, Miss Sinclair's *Lena Wrace*, Mr. Grant Watson's *Out There*, and some others—were already to be found on the shelves of most of us. In those days, Mr. Ford tells us—he is writing of the first decade of this century—the most imbecile and pernicious of all the doctrines of the trade was that the public would not buy short stories:

> The trade offered that tremendous pronouncement in the face of the fact that Mr. Rudyard Kipling, Mr. H. G. Wells and Mr. W. W. Jacobs were the three greatest sellers the world had ever seen to date. So short story writing as an art had practically come to an end in England. The cheaper periodicals published short stories so badly constructed, so oleaginous, and so ill-written that if ever by accident I came across them I always used to think that I was reading publicity for somebody's hair oil. So the short story writer had absolutely nowhere to go. He could not for shame appear in those periodicals, the publisher would not print him, the bookseller refused to buy him, the library would not circulate him.

Allowing for the exaggeration of exuberance (for not one of the three writers mentioned can have approached Dickens as a "seller"), what immediately strikes one about these remarks is that most of them are as apt to the present situation in England as to that of the early nineteen hundreds. Things are a little better. Short-story writing as an art is not dead, and the serious short-story writer has not "absolutely nowhere" to go; for there are perhaps as many as three periodicals (among hundreds) willing to give him a hearing. But the legend that the British public will not have short stories at any price is still warmly fostered and industriously circulated; and the first impulse, if not the invariable practice of booksellers, in this particular Battle of the Books, is to fall down dead before a shot has been fired. Mr. Ford tells a good story of how he asked for Conrad's *Youth* volume (three tales, each one a masterpiece) in the most intelligently managed book store in England known to him, only to be told, by the "extremely intelligent manager," that he didn't stock the book. "The public," he said, "will not buy volumes of short stories." Mr. Ford challenged the statement, asking for evidence. "Dammit," said the bookseller, "the public won't buy short stories. I must have told fifty fools that already this week. They were all asking for that absurd book you want." It would be gratifying to believe that such a conversation could not happen to-day; and it would make us love Brother Bookseller the more if we could hold him guiltless of having helped to delay that general recognition and that comparatively small ultimate commercial success which were denied to Conrad for so many weary years. Nor will it do to contend that trade conditions, and in particular the temper and intelligence of those engaged in the trade, have no decisive influence on literary fortunes. "But we can't *make* the public buy particular books!" protests the bookseller. Which is evident nonsense; for the thing is being done every day. A lady wanders into a bookshop and stands hovering in the neighbourhood of the new fiction. "I want a good novel," she confides to the young man who waits upon her. "Now what would you suggest?" The answer is easy and prompt. "This is selling very well, madam," says the young man, smartly displaying the most popular of the current fashions. And he is perhaps tempted to add: "It goes admirably with Moddom's hat." The same kind of dialogue may be heard in the circulating

libraries, except that there, I understand, they say "nice" instead of "good." It is true that where the novel is concerned there has been a revolutionary change since the war. "In secret agreement," says Mr. Ford—and the phrase, with its suggestion of dark conspiracy, seems designed to make our flesh creep—"the trade had arrived at the conclusion that the Nuvvle must not be shorter than seventy-five thousand words or longer than one hundred thousand words. . . . Nothing could be more disastrous for the art of the novel in England." Whereas the dogma of to-day, not only in the trade but among some critics who ought to know better, is that while the seventy-five thousand word novel may still be tolerated, your really good novel must contain not less—and as many more as possible—than five or six hundred crowded pages. I say "not only in the trade" advisedly; for only the other day an excellent writer, in the course of a (favourable) review of a volume of short stories, expressed the hope that their author would "give us something longer." Which is precisely as though one were to lament that Mr. W. H. Davies does not abandon the short lyric, of which he is a master, in favour of long narrative poems in the manner of Mr. Masefield. The novel rather than the short story, and the padded-out novel rather than the novel whose length is in decent proportion to its imaginative substance: these merely commercial desiderata are the stars to which young writers of to-day, on the advice of their elders, are hitching their waggons. And, echoing Mr. Ford, I suggest that nothing could be more disastrous for the art of fiction in England.

We have gains, however, to set against our losses. And if the short story to-day is pretty widely regarded as a form of art (not as the idle diversion of men too lazy to write novels) and if a man may now practise that form without being accused of Ninetyism or self-conscious elegance, we have (among other people and things) Ford Madox Ford and Arthur Marwood to thank for this happier state of affairs. These two, in the beginning of the century, founded the *English Review*, Marwood's chief motive being to print a poem of Thomas Hardy's that had been refused publication by the usual organs, and Ford's to find room for Conrad's less marketable stories. The first issue contained work by Hardy, Henry James, Conrad, Galsworthy, W. H. Hudson, Tolstoy, and Wells. Later came *Tono-Bungay*, in four instalments; and in 1910, or thereabouts, Austin Harrison continued the good work by adding Anatole France, Arnold Bennett, and Frank Harris to the list of contributors. The tales that Mr. Horace Shipp has now collected include some that are not good examples of the art of the short story: an art which, at its best, can impose dramatic unity on events however discontinuous in time and space, and lead us to a moment of lyrical illumination. But there are one or two brilliant things here, and the volume as a whole provides an interesting record of achievement.

GERALD BULLETT.

THE BIRTH OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

The Maritime and Colonial Expansion of England Under the Stuarts. By A. D. INNES. Sampson Low. 12s. 6d.

The average modern Englishman of Imperialist sympathies, if asked of a sudden to give a date for the foundation of the British Empire, would probably mention the sixteenth century—having in his head vague thoughts of Drake. He would be wrong, of course; and the fact that he would instinctively make this mis-statement is no doubt part of what our young Roman Catholic writers are beginning to refer to as "the great Elizabethan bally-hoo." The seventeenth century has been scurvily treated by the historians. The brilliant Elizabethans were, no doubt, difficult people to follow. Yet, in this matter of the origin of our Empire, it is no more than a simple fact that "when Elizabeth died, even as when she came to the throne, England was not in occupation of one acre of soil outside the British Isles." A hundred years later, when the last Stuart monarch died, we held the whole Eastern seaboard of North America, the Hudson Bay territory, many of the islands of the West Indies, and Madras, Bombay, and other important trading stations in the East.

The words quoted above are those of Mr. A. D. Innes, a careful, unemotional historian, who can be trusted to deal as justly with the Stuarts as he already has with the Tudors. Unlike King James I he has no favourites. The personal charm of James's ill-used son and the swashbuckling foreign policy of Cromwell leave him equally cold. The one was a weakling, the other a fool; for if Charles's imperialism was cowardly, Oliver's consisted of hitting the wrong man—Spain. The real obstacle in the way of the founding of our Empire was Holland (Mr. Innes might have added a little colour to his pages by quoting from some of the excellent contemporary evidence on this subject), and after Holland, France: never Spain. In an admirably lucid passage Mr. Innes shows how Charles quailed before that obstacle; how the Commonwealth Parliament, after Charles's execution, prepared to attack it; how Cromwell reversed the whole process, "since he was possessed with the conviction that Spain was the enemy," and sent his filibustering expedition to Jamaica instead; and how the Restoration, very properly, returned to the foreign policy of the Commonwealth. If Mr. Innes allows himself any favouritism it is towards the Dutch. He praises their "indomitable tenacity," and, in one curious passage, seems to suggest that, in the fighting at sea, their fleet was invariably inferior to ours. But he is under no delusion regarding their attitude towards the new-born British Empire. Holland was the real obstacle, and only religious prejudice or sheer muddle-headed conservatism can have blinded Cromwell to this fact.

Mr. Innes traces the movement for expansion back to its true origins—not the least of which was the unemployment problem created, in the first instance, by the suppression of the monasteries. He might have quoted Hakluyt here. The sixteenth century had discovered a new world in the West, and a new trade in the East. The seventeenth took up the no less important, but less romantic task of counting and dividing the spoils. Mr. Innes follows the English effort step by step both in the East and in the West. He forgets nothing, and the impression left on the mind as one closes the book is that of having read at least two volumes instead of one. Yet he is always clear and readable, though he sticks so close to the facts and has sternly ignored all those little by-paths which it would have been delightful to explore. His book makes a worthy companion to Mr. J. A. Williamson's *Short History of British Expansion*—and that is high praise. It seems worth mentioning, in view of the possibility of further editions, that two of the dates given on page 24 are a hundred years out.

A CENTURY OF MURDERS

Murders and Murder Trials, 1812-1912. By H. M. WALBROOK. Constable. 7s. 6d.

It would be interesting to speculate on the reason why a murder or a murder trial arouses more public attention than the infringement of any other of the Ten Commandments, than the rise and fall of governments, and even than a flying family or the latest achievement of a record-breaking gladiator. Mr. Walbrook, who in this book recalls twenty-nine British murders, in the main well known, which have taken place in the last 100 years, hardly touches on this aspect of his subject, and doubtless his sales will make it appear almost too self-evident to seem worthy of analysis. One thing, however, emerges, and that is that the fascination exercised over the popular mind by a murderer is not merely a question of fashion; its roots lie deep in human nature, and it may be that the epithet "morbid" which is so often applied to it is misplaced. The truth would appear to be that each of us attaches a great—perhaps a far too great—importance to our own lives, and therefore, by a simple logical process, to the lives of other people; and that the thought of a man or woman who has not only taken human life, but is also in dire peril of losing his or her own, compels a half-unconscious placing of ourselves in the same position. It is, indeed, difficult to decide at what point the fascination ceases to be natural and becomes morbid; that aroused by public executions is to-day adjudged to fall into the latter category. Mr. Walbrook shows how the campaign against these developed; and perhaps the day is not far off when capital punishment itself will be condemned on the same grounds. Concerning newspapers we have not been so consistent. In more than one case Mr. Walbrook demonstrates the evils of "trial by newspaper"; and while the "contempt of court" rule is rigidly enforced to-day, we still allow the sensational press to tickle the palate of the public with details little less repulsive to read than an execution must have been to witness.

Other facts and tendencies about murder become evident as Mr. Walbrook unfolds for us the crimes of a century. Of his

twenty-nine murderers four were almost certainly insane, of whom one was hanged, and one, Jack the Ripper, never identified; and four much less certainly so, of whom three were poisoners. The poisoner is seen to be in a class by himself, and the cold-blooded fiendishness implied by this kind of murder tends to inspire among the charitable a presumption of insanity. In no fewer than sixteen cases the chief or sole motive was pecuniary gain, although the spoils were designed to be put to very various uses. In seven of the others the murderer's relationship with a member of the opposite sex has been directly responsible for his or her crime. Two of the murders can be attributed to jealousy, one to revenge, and one to a sense of grievance; while the motives for the remaining two are doubtful. These figures will perhaps prove somewhat unexpected to the ordinary reader, who has been hypnotised by the novelette and the newspaper into thinking the *crime passionel* the most common variety. There was serious doubt about the guilt of two only of the accused persons, and each was acquitted; in two other cases there was a slight doubt, and in neither was the death penalty carried out; in the case of Lee only because the trap-door three times refused to work. British justice, in murder trials at least, would appear on the whole to justify its reputation.

It is not, however, as a basis for statistics or as covering new ground that Mr. Walbrook's book will be read. The names of his murderers, Wainewright, Courvoisier, William Palmer, Charles Peace, Crippen, and Seddon, for instance, are nearly all familiar, and he appears to have relied chiefly for his material on *Notable British Trials*. What he has done is to place these murders in a readable, if superficial, way against the background of the age in which they were committed, and this justifies the retelling even of such a well-known story as that of the murder in the Red Barn. He also points the moral of each case in a manner calculated to stimulate thought and controversy concerning such diverse subjects as the secrecy of the confessional; communication cords in railway trains; the Married Women's Property Act; evidence given by an accused person; poisoned chocolates, and the limits of legitimate advocacy. All of which the reader may be sure of finding entertaining and often instructive.

A COMEDY OF MASKS

Snooty Baronet. By WYNDHAM LEWIS. Cassell. 7s. 6d.

"Is *Snooty Baronet*," the publisher asks on the wrapper, "a new departure in the art of fiction? Is it destined"—here Mr. Lewis almost seems to be speaking—"is it destined, like Mr. Wyndham Lewis's first book *Tarr*, to become 'a date in literature'?" The answer to both questions is, No. It is hardly even a date in Mr. Lewis's literature. But *Snooty Baronet* is actually more like *Tarr* than anything Mr. Lewis has done since. In his new role of filibuster-anthropologist he writes now in the first person, assuming a title and a wooden leg; the machinery of his description rattles comically in place of the old creak, the conversations are less metaphysical and more Hogarthian. Compared with *Tarr* this new novel has lost something in massiveness but gained in speed, comedy, and the odd confrontation of character. The first hundred pages are magnificent comedy (Mr. Lewis has a genius for beginning any novel well); the visit of the one-legged baronet to "old Val," a war-horse mistress of the old school, is as good a piece of narrative in the stark and sinister-comic style as anything Mr. Lewis has done. The side-tracks of sex in *Apes of God* and *The Childermass* seem to have equipped him with a more effective gusto for grappling with the normal manifestation of sex. His exposure of the grotesque side of lust—the familiar signals, the clanking of apparatus—is by now complete, and with completeness there is a huge element of sheer fun. *Snooty Baronet* is a really funny book (a queer derivation this from *Tarr*); the observatism of the earlier book, the patient zeal of the bird-watcher, have largely disappeared in the author's enjoyment of his theme. He has even come to treat his characters with a slapping affection. "Old Val" is an excellent piece of comic creation, the better for having a little sympathy. The "snooty baronet" himself, from his first astonishing appearance at a taxi-door—one eye sullen, the other wide-awake, and a wooden leg planked out on to the pavement—is more than the layer of masks which he proceeds to strip off himself in the course of his narrative. The book is a comedy of masks, more than life-size and resounding like the Greek, but it is a remarkably living comedy. After the first impact—the bout between the protagonists—it tails off in a succession of episodes abroad which are fitfully brilliant. Mr. Lewis does not work up to any climax, the "big scene" so essential for his kind of satire. Instead of packing his later scenes, he makes the mistake of dropping some of the characters and even killing one of them off. He even borrows a comic brigand from Shaw. When they all end up in Persia, among kerosene tins, aeroplanes and houris, one longs for the more startling comedy of the Tottenham Court Road.

THE ART OF TOLERANCE

Reading, Writing and Remembering. By E. V. LUCAS. Methuen. 18s.

If the gentle philosopher of the Garden ever had a perfect apostle, that apostle is Mr. E. V. Lucas. Urbanity that is not out of character in rustic settings, tolerant simplicity that is unbroken in the sophisticated and heavy atmosphere of literary London, a quiet pagan courage; these are qualities that might serve to warn pedants, zealots, fanatics, and geniuses to shun his work. But the warning would be useless; for nobody can shun E. V. L.; not even prophets with new worlds to build. E. V. L. is, in fact, a *condition*, a permeative force; and at some moment in any week, every human being passes into that condition, even though unaware of its source.

How best to describe E. V. L. puzzles me. I cannot even with competence place my finger on the particular aspect of his quality at which I warm myself. How is it possible to define a man who has done so much, and is the friend of so many diverse characters? If one emphasises his tolerance, one has also to point out how implacable and impenetrable he can be towards awkward personalities, and how ironically suspicious of uncontrollable eccentricity. After reading, for instance, the account of his only visit to The Pines, Putney, I was impressed, in spite of the humour and the appreciation, by an undercurrent of something almost contemptuous, as though for E. V. L. those two quaint old figures were admittedly outside his sympathies. After telling the Alice-in-Wonderland tale of his meal with Watts Dunton and "The Bard," he concludes, "That Swinburne did not wholly disapprove of me I gathered from the fact that when, not long after, his novel *Love's Cross Currents* was published, he sent me a copy with an autograph inscription, and, two or three days later, another."

But while detecting here a touch of contempt for such amusing muddle-headedness, I am filled with misgiving. For is not E. V. L. the biographer of Lamb, a being also streaked with irresponsible madness that was unequalled even after a full career as an efficient servant of the East India Company? No,

SHELL

for a quarter of a century has had the same good name

it is a mistake to think E. V. L. insensitive to the deeper and more sinister tones of the music of humanity. Were he so, he could never have written so magnificently of Conrad, one of the most tortured and solitary of inspired mortals:

> With Conrad's death a very great writer passed away. He was an artist through and through, understanding all and hoping for very little; alone, in his narrative method, in his use of words, and in his view of the universe. It was always on his mind that man should be so much the sport of destiny and the slave of emotion. If he had never been a sailor with a craving for adventure, his books would be the saddest things; but the sea and the East brought in a misty atmosphere of loveliness and strangeness in which the futility and frustration of human effort were shrouded and now and then almost forgotten.

Several of the phrases in that passage might be used as proofs of the sensitive awareness underlying E. V. L.'s deliberate preoccupation with the pleasant and even the sentimental and post-prandial things of life. "Understanding all and hoping for very little." That is a touch of Prospero.

The same sensibility enables him to pay a fine tribute to Maurice Hewlett, whose genius seems to be utterly neglected to-day. Even Mr. Lucas underestimates Hewlett's epic *The Song of the Plough*, one of the two or three English poems successfully written in *terza rima*. There is something sinister in the work of Conrad and Hewlett, and also in that of Norman Douglas, of whom E. V. L. says, "There is no living writer of prose whom I taste with more relish than this ironical, unfaltering searcher after beauty and fearless despiser of all that is taken for granted." Then again, E. V. L. declares himself a lover of James Thomson, that mordant disciple of Bradlaugh. It is puzzling, therefore, to find E. V. L. also declaring that the novel is a vehicle intended for the conveyance only of amusement, and that the more horrifying problems of life should be kept out of it. The explanation of this inconsistency of taste with dogma may perhaps be found in his confession:

> I seem very early to have doubted and denied. In fact, all my life I have been without belief in any guiding purpose behind the veil and with too quick a consciousness of the world's inequality, injustice, cruelty and of the waste and frustration that are continually evident. This is why almost all my writing has been concerned with the pleasant things, and why I have laid so much emphasis on what I found to be beautiful or worthy of honour. Perhaps I was thus concentrating for fear that I might weep.

But to concentrate too much on discovering the identity of the character of E. V. L. is probably the wrong way to approach him. It is certainly the opposite of the way in which he approaches life. For never did a writer lose himself more ardently and willingly than E. V. L. in the world around him. As traveller, connoisseur, clubman, frequenter of picture galleries and ancient monuments, friend and observer of great literary figures and of ordinary folk (the latter often less ordinary than the former), E. V. L. has lived, and is still living, a life brimming with centrifugal pleasure. And the harvest of his mental and physical wanderings has been stored in the easy granary of an excellent memory, ready for all occasions that may arise in the course of friendship and solitude; none of them more propitious, however, than the present one, where he has felt the impulse to set down the record of his literary life.

That record is so rich and varied that a reviewer could quote a hundred good stories, and still come to no conclusion. Perhaps that is why it is more satisfactory to try to discover the personality underlying all this genial memorabilia put together "without belief in any guiding purpose behind the veil."

RICHARD CHURCH.

THE MODERN DILEMMA

Freedom in the Modern World. By JOHN MACMURRAY. Faber. 6s.

"That metaphysics should approve itself to commonsense is indeed out of the question," said Bradley, complacently dismissing with the remark not metaphysics but commonsense. It was an expression of the assumption which has always vitiated academic philosophy that the nature of truth is not a fit study for the ordinary man. There are certain philosophers to-day, among them Professor Macmurray, who have come to the conclusion that any philosophy which is not concerned with the real problems of ordinary people is sheer waste of time. If the plain man is not capable of questioning the fact of his existence, so much the better for him. Breaking away from the Oxford tradition of inspired unintelligibility, Professor Macmurray has set out in two courses of wireless lectures, "The Modern Dilemma" and "Reality and Freedom," here reproduced, his application of a humanistic philosophy to the problems of modern life. Doubting at first the value of any attempt to popularise his subject matter, for broadcasting purposes, he became gradually convinced that the translation of philosophic thought into the language of everyday was the most valuable mental discipline to which a thinker could submit.

He succeeds remarkably in stating the main principles of a modernised Kantian idealism. The originality in his restatement of the old doctrine of self-realisation lies in his insistence on the importance of feeling as the means of apprehending value and on the allied conclusion that since it is the nature of man to know what is not himself, he can only fully develop that nature in emotional communion with other persons. That is to say, the essence of morality is friendship.

Diagnosing the philosophical problem presented by contemporary life as "the detachment of our emotional life from our intellectual conclusions," he sees the solution in a liberation of feeling from the bonds in which it is held by a civilisation too Roman in its culture. Reduced to its simplest terms, his ethical philosophy is a re-interpretation of our view that "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" embodies the whole duty of man. In this identification of idealist ethics with the Christian morality, Professor Macmurray presumably finds his answer to the objection that self-realisation is too egotistical an object to be the proper end of conduct. If it is man's nature to look outwards, it can only be by means of his capacity for embracing "otherness" that he can help to bring about the ultimate harmony which is the ideal implicit in all systems of morality.

The distinction drawn between real and unreal feeling suggests that reason has a greater part to play in the problem of conduct than Professor Macmurray is prepared to admit. To grant that the reality of feeling can be tested only by experience is to admit the controlling function of reason. There can be no doubt that it is by means of the emotions that value is apprehended. But since man's nature, being finite, is necessarily inadequate to the real, it seems to follow that in conduct feeling must be regulated by reason in the form of logical conclusions from experience.

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VICTORIAN SILHOUETTES

The Great Victorians. Edited by H. J. MASSINGHAM and HUGH MASSINGHAM. Nicholson and Watson. 8s. 6d.

This curious, irritating yet (in parts at least) exciting production can hardly be treated as a book. When forty living are gathered together to discuss the characters and achievements of forty dead the result resembles not literature but a large (too large) and intellectual (too intellectual) party. The room chosen for this particular party has not been big enough. Probably no book covers could contain the expression of so many different personalities and points of view without destroying that equability which is necessary to induce in the reader a mood of receptiveness. It is as difficult to settle down quietly to any one of the essays in *The Great Victorians* as it is to listen in an overcrowded drawing room to the conversation of any one person.

One of the differences between the Victorians and ourselves is that the Victorians would never have thought it a good idea to get together and make a book like this about their predecessors. A lot for one's money; doing things in a crowd, quickly, cheaply; "the more we are together the happier we shall be"; Green Line charabancs with room for everyone, going everywhere: all this we understand and like to-day, and the literary omnibus is the characteristic book invention of our time.

But apart from this rather irrelevant distinction between the two ages, this collection of essays chiefly serves to emphasise how little one learns of the peculiarities of any age through a study of its greatest minds. Among these forty notable dead there are scarcely four whose Victorianism is not the least remarkable thing about them, and the essayists who succeed best in holding our attention are those who appear least troubled by any idea that the editors might have a thesis about Victorians. To catch the essential spirit of an age is not always big game shooting; those who go out after it with mouse-traps and fly-papers are often the most successful hunters. That immortal work *Home Life With Herbert Spencer*, by "Two," caught the Victorian age at its most Victorian moment and transfixed it alive upon a cork. No real poet, painter or philosopher could have been so clever as Herbert Spencer's artless companions.

Of course one notices differences between the lives described here and the lives of those who may be considered the great men of the Twentieth Century. If one picks out the lives of the more active—General Booth, Gladstone, W. G. Grace, Lord Palmerston, Cecil Rhodes, to mention a few—one is struck by the comparatively clear field given them to work out their destinies. In this century the war made some careers, but it marred far more; it turned even the strongest streams out of their courses.

Mr. St. John Ervine's essay on General Booth gives one the impression of being dashed off in a great hurry, but all the better so. He has only half an hour to spend at this party but he must get General Booth off his chest, and his voice booms out the story of the harsh, unpicturesque, tremendous life. The voice still booms as one reads the ever acute Miss Rebecca West on Charlotte Brontë and Mr. Charles Morgan on Emily; and one pictures General Booth chatting with Branwell Brontë. Another essay, even better, although less insistent than Mr. Ervine's, is Mr. Clifford Sharp's on Cecil Rhodes, a vivid, succinct piece of work. Mr. H. J. Massingham polishes off Huxley for ever:

> The evil that a man of Huxley's calibre left to live after him will never be measured. That he destroyed our faith in creeds and religious formulae was as nothing to his ruin of an intuitive belief in the elements of human nature. He made us turn in disgust from our own honest earthiness either to a sickly spirituality or a coarse glorification of get on or go under. But the worst thing he did was to take a foremost mental part in the greatest revolution the world has ever known—the discovery of evolution—and then to vulgarize the process by which, through an infinitude of intricate and gracious forms, each more perfect than the one that preceded it, a speck of protoplasm resolved itself to man. Huxley was a Briareus in an age of giants. His humour, his force, his learning and integrity, his illustrative brilliance and unexampled quality of exposition were employed in a hundred fields. Yet it would undoubtedly have been better and happier for mankind if he had never been born.

The whole book is not on this energetic level; inevitably there are some good patches and many poor ones; for while talking in a large company puts some people on their mettle, it gives others the courage to be foolish. There may be five hundred pages in this book not worth much more than a shilling, but the remaining fifty-six are worth the balance of its cost.

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SHORTER NOTICES

A Cavalier in Muscovy. By BARONESS SOPHIE BUXHOEVEDEN. Macmillan. 15s.

The Cavalier whose story is told here is General Patrick Gordon, the seventeenth century Scots adventurer, who, after various campaigns with the Swedes and the Poles, entered the service of the Tsar Alexis, rose to high rank in the Russian army, and became one of the principal military instructors of Peter the Great. Gordon's story is told mainly from his diaries, which reveal him as a shrewd, able, honourable and amiable man, adapting himself skilfully and gracefully to an environment which throughout his life was always more or less distasteful to him. But interesting as the actual biography is, more interesting still is the vivid background against which we see it. The period covered is the age of transition, when the West and its culture began to undermine the native barbarism of the Tsars and their nobility. In this change Gordon played no inconsiderable part, for he seems to have been the first foreigner to break down the social exclusiveness of the nobility.

The Western Isles: Their History, Traditions, and Place-Names. By W. C. MACKENZIE. Alexander Gardner: Paisley. 6s.

The nucleus of this entertaining book is a selection of Lewis tales and traditions taken from the manuscript of a nineteenth-century shop-keeper, John Morrison, who was a poor tradesman but an excellent snapper-up of unconsidered trifles in the way of stories. There are wild tales of MacLeods and MacAulays, the ancestors (so we are reminded) of "the celebrated Thomas B. Macaulay, Esq., M.P., well known for his superior talent, etc." Pathos is found in the story of the two brothers, separated by a jealous wife, who died of mutual love; but best of all perhaps is the tale of the merry prisoner in Dunholm, who sang and danced in his dungeon all one year, and then fell into melancholy. The Macdonalds, thinking he had been mad but was now restored to his senses and to repentance, went down to visit him, and found an empty—and over-looked—puncheon which a year before had been full of double rum.

Jovial King: Napoleon's Youngest Brother. By F. M. KIRCHEISEN. Mathews and Marrot. 12s. 6d.

It was a characteristic of Napoleon to be weakly indulgent to members of his own family. To meet the most trivial of the Bonapartes as Herr Kircheisen presents him is to wonder again what might have been Napoleon's fate—and Europe's—had he been the only son of his mother. In this study of Jerome Bonaparte Herr Kircheisen, it would seem, has striven to write down to the level of his subject; he is at times almost as playful as Napoleon himself in his treatment of the handsome, amiable, and extravagant fribble. The story of the Westphalian Kingdom, however, is well told; and the earlier chapters, which deal with Jerome's upbringing, the licence allowed him as a naval officer, and the American marriage, have a prefatory value as introducing us to the man whom Napoleon thought worthy to be a king. The book is agreeably illustrated with reproductions of portraits and scenes from paintings and prints.

Men on the Horizon. By GUY MURCHIE, JR. Cape. 10s. 6d.

Here is a travel book quite out of the ordinary. Mr. Murchie worked his way round the north of the world, as seaman, engineer and labourer, living intimately not only with his companions of the fo'c'sle, engine room and mining camp, but also with the native peoples of the lands through which he passed. He spent some time in the Yukon, travelling the old trails and meeting the old-timers. He then sailed to Hawaii and the Philippines and thence to Japan where, after an exceedingly polite arrest—his camera was suspect—he lodged, if that is the word, with a Japanese family, living as one of themselves, sharing bed and bath and all the amenities and inconveniences of a civilisation which he found singularly attractive. Later, in Southern China, his relations with the people were only a little less intimate. He passed through Russia and comments on the kindness he noticed there, and the new spirit of youth.

No Quarter. By ALEC WAUGH. Cassell. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Alec Waugh has discovered the fascination of the story of Piracy and decided to make it palatable to a large public. So he has written a novel called *No Quarter*, which tells the adventures in piracy of a single family during three hundred years. But he was in such a hurry to cover his period that he could not stop to bring any of his characters to life. He does succeed with charm in showing us places—Jamaica, Martinique, Haiti—the book is full of pictures, tantalisingly vivid and vigorous, but it is a painted backcloth for marionettes. Even Roger Vaisseau, the first pirate of his line, is incredible, pushed and pulled here and there to fit the exigencies of plot; and François Doublon, on the stock exchange, and Beak-nose Othie, the Chicago gun-man, have even their piracy thrust hastily upon them in the last few pages. The dialogue is equally unreal. "It was a gentle country. . . . With the sun not too hot; and faint mists covering it; with rain so soft that you scarcely knew it was rain. Then there were hills, with the grass so smooth that you would think it velvet. . . ." Do blood-thirsty, drunken pirates really talk like this of their birth-place, even in their cups? Mr. Waugh's book is readable and entertaining, but in his attempt to fill the two roles of historian and novelist at the same time he has not made a success of either.

The Three Gentlemen. By A. E. W. MASON. Hodder and Stoughton. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Mason's *The Three Gentlemen* is a kind of "metempsychosis told to the children." To do it justice, it is a completely written story of reincarnation which rides firmly on the surface of the theory, refusing to flounder in the depths, and provides interesting entertainment for an hour or so. The three gentlemen are Attilius Scaurus, Anthony Scarr and Adrian Shard, whose bodies are inhabited by the same spirit, a triple incarnation of the spirit of youth offering itself to the service of the world. This gives Mr. Mason the opportunity to create with facility and charm first the historical background of Roman Britain and secondly of Elizabethan England, with the contemporary scene of 1932 more lightly sketched in Part III. During these eighteen hundred years the spirit of Attilius-Anthony-Adrian is steadily progressing towards the light, and towards the fulfilment of his love for a girl from whom as Sergia and Sylvia he is snatched by death, and whom as Sonia he marries, presumably to live happily ever after. Part I is the best and has a rather delightful freshness of outlook, but Part III approaches the cheap sensationalism of newspaper fiction. The ideal of "service" remains throughout vague and sentimental, and consequently the book loses much of its point.

About Motoring

A PERILOUS TRIP

YESTERDAY I covered 300 miles in a cross-country journey over the full width of England. I have always previously supposed that the dangers of the road were slightly exaggerated in popular imagination, owing to the massing of statistics covering an immense number of cars which annually travel an immense total mileage. But this journey rather opened my eyes. In its course I was within nodding distance of serious collision on some twenty occasions, an experience without parallel in a prolonged road history. It may interest other drivers to hear how most of the emergencies arose. In nearly every case the route lay along secondary roads, which are of a comfortable width for two lines of traffic, but can only accommodate three cars abreast if the outer cars are scraping the hedges. After the usual fashion of such roads, straights were infrequent and short, and the journey consisted of an interminable succession of easy curves. Over and over again when I was about a hundred yards short of a bulge in the hedge which cut off visibility as with a knife, some other car would pull up level with me. If this car was of the typical family saloon type, it was not likely to be doing more than forty miles an hour; and as I was cruising at the standard speed of 30–35 miles an hour, it would take at least sixty yards to clear me, if I maintained my speed. Oncoming cars would in every case assume that the odds were in favour of a clear road ahead, and would approach from around the bend at the standard touring speed of 30–35, or rather more. On any such occasion if all three drivers maintained their respective speeds, a very nasty emergency developed in that split second when we sighted each other. Such emergencies might be soluble. If we all braked instantly and very hard; if the road surface were good enough to eliminate skidding; or if we all three kept our heads and steered with such razor nicety that the three of us contrived to cram ourselves abreast into a road designed to hold but two of us. In actual fact, I have my own prescription for such embroglios. It partakes of real humility, but I value my neck and my car and my passengers even more than I value my pride. So if a fool roars up abreast of me too near to a cut-off in the forward visibility, I brake hard, and let him slip into safe station ahead of me at the earliest possible moment. By so doing I enable him to complete the overtaking and to regain his proper side of the road perhaps thirty yards sooner than he anticipated; and I gain this infinitely precious 30 yard vantage supposing a dangerous situation develops through the sudden arrival of another car. The whole position is so elementary that breaches of the rules of safety first under such obvious conditions sound incredible. But they occurred and recurred with sickening frequency during the whole distance of yesterday's run in eight different counties.

It is difficult to be constructive in such a matter, beyond advising all drivers to copy my own obvious prescription; it is a simple expedient, but I have rarely seen other drivers employ it. The imposition of driving tests would be no cure. I have

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passed driving tests in several countries in order to obtain their driving permits; and none of these tests proved anything. It would be possible, and more profitable, to compel all applicants for a driving licence to attend a series of instructions. To the best of my belief, this suggestion is original and novel. It would cost money, but its cost might well prove trivial compared to the potential saving of human life and the probable improvement in driving standards. The time has come for us to recognise that too many Britons are grossly unimaginative. They can only see as far as their own noses. The guilty drivers who passed me yesterday, recognised with their sensory organs that there was room to overtake before the corner. But they lacked the imagination which would have made them reflect, "What will happen if another car suddenly appears from around that corner at speed?" Without any doubt at all the majority of them could be trained to better methods by a compulsory system of instruction. The cost of such lectures should be borne by the people who need the instruction.

A comparatively small percentage of the calamities which were narrowly averted during this journey were due to a failure to give the routine "turning right" signal; and in every case the culprits were drivers of tradesmen's vans in rural areas. This class of driver is generally a lad of comparatively poor intelligence, handling a cheap vehicle. These vans have solid rear panels, and the driver's only hope of knowing whether another vehicle is on his tail depends entirely on his making an intelligent use of his mirror, which he almost invariably ignores. This common blunder provides another argument in favour of compulsory instruction for drivers. The action of the lad's mind is usually plain to any sympathetic observer. He is turning at right angles into the narrow entrance of some farmyard or workshop. He is scared of hitting a wing against the side-post. He has probably buckled wings on several previous occasions through petty miscalculations in similar circumstances, and has been warned that he will get the sack if he errs again. He has never been rammed broadside in making such a turn, and there is only room for one idea at a time in his simple mind. His driving mirror is usually much too small, rather ill-placed, and steeply convex. It does not automatically command his mind, and he ignores it. His whole brain, such as it is, and both his eyes are concentrated on coaxing his broad van through the narrow entry without fouling the post. Not until some car dinges in the whole side of his miserable van will he learn to accommodate the two necessary ideas at one and the same time.

The French and other Continental nations adopt a quicker plan of dealing with both road crimes. When their roads narrow and twist, they erect signs forbidding all drivers to *doubler, i.e.*, to drive two abreast in the same direction. We can hardly copy this scheme, as many thousands of miles of our roads are unsafe for doubling. They also enforce mechanical turning signals. This should be done as soon as some genius invents a satisfactory apparatus. No patent in existence at present meets all our needs.

R. E. DAVIDSON.

Playtime

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

No. 12.—PHLEGMATITIS AT THE CURATE'S

To his evening party the Curate invited the Rector, the Doctor, the Schoolmaster and the Vet.

The Doctor had been a passenger on the "Phlegmatic." Impressed by his experiences, the party decided to devote the evening to conundrums.

"Each of us in turn will set seven puzzles," said the Doctor. "But we found on the 'Phlegmatic' that disputes were almost inevitable, so I suggest that each, when his turn comes to set puzzles, shall choose a referee who will not compete in solving them."

"Agreed," said everyone.

The Doctor chose the Schoolmaster as his referee; the Schoolmaster the Curate; the Curate the Vet.; the Vet. the Rector, and the Rector the Doctor.

And, by a curious coincidence, each (except the Rector) chose as his referee the man next in ability as a conundrum-solver to himself. None of the five competitors was beaten by a lower-ranking individual, where they were in competition with one another, as regards the numbers which they respectively solved of conundrums set by a particular individual.

Stakes were limited, at the Rector's request, to very modest figures. One point was awarded by the referee to one solver in respect of each conundrum. Each winner of a point became entitled to 1d., in respect of that point, from each of those competing against him. At the end of each set of seven conundrums the loser or losers on balance, among competitors in that set, paid into a pool the number of pence lost on balance. The winner or winners on balance then drew out what was due to them.

(1) *The largest pool was the last, which was equal in amount to the total of the previous three. The second pool was equal in amount to the total of the third and fourth.*

(2) *The two largest pools aggregated over 2s.*

(3) *The aggregate winnings (on balance) of those who on balance won was the smallest possible, having regard to* (1) *and* (2) *above.*

(4) *The Curate on balance won 6d.*

What were the winnings or losses respectively of each of the Curate's guests?

No. 10.—SMALLS.

Pupp—Exeter; Davies—Wadham; White—Merton; Hooper—B.N.C.; Collins—Lincoln; Lewis—Jesus; Cook—Balliol.

For future use, I am reconstructing this problem. More data are offered than are really necessary. Curiously, no competitor has spotted this.

I am shocked at the number of solvers who have commented exultingly on the lowly place obtained by the candidate from Balliol.

No. 9.—BETTY'S CIPHER.

Sets of Low's cartoons are awarded to:

(1) W. B. Owen, 33 Wesley Road, Stanningley, near Leeds.

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There were 61 correct solutions, as compared with 92 for "Rain."

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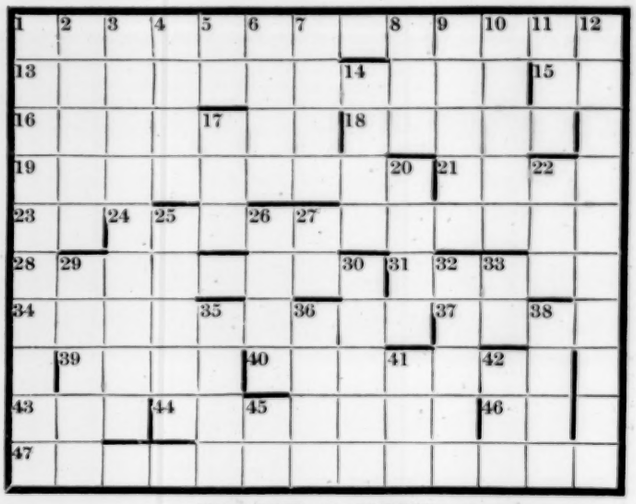
TRINCULO'S CROSSWORD



FOR THE 40 ACROSS

ACROSS.

1. Here are many passages.
13. This Chairman gnaws at his chair.
15. Not yet.
16. Scotch perhaps.
18. Sad end of a tangent cone.
19 *rev.* Terror of seaside lanes.
21. Stand up.
23. Exemplificatory.
24. Recommended frequently by Mr. Belloc.
28. Arise again.
31. Squirrel monkey before 46.
34. You'll find 'em in the choir.
37 *rev.* Gaseous and (presumably) new.
39. Manifest.
40. Not old in youth.
43. Setback.
44. Head of Gambetta.
46. *See* 31.
47. Capacity to be counted out.

DOWN.

1. You can do this to Lord Snowden.
2. Emulating.
3. Tons of tunny.
4 *rev.* Beginnings of gentlemanly preference.
5. Medico.
6. Fricassee of heron.
7 *rev.* 'Cellist's interior.
8. Second half of the second.
9. Return of a native delicacy.
10. Privately confused.
11. Cereal.
12. So flappers always approach me.
14 *rev.* Best avoided.
17. I am half a metre.
20. No I no in a card game.
22 *rev.* I'm extinct.
25. College window.
26. Wage slave.
27. Half of three words in this Crossword.
29. Stands for an artist.
30 *rev.* Intelligence tester.
32. Winged creature emitting a musical note.
33. Hail, Caesar.
35. Goldless cast.
36. Well-known author by-and-bye.
38. Prepare for publication.
41. Half of a sentient being.
42 *rev.* At the end of the spire.
45. The same half of the same three words.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD.

ACROSS.—1. international. 12. nominal. 14. artist. 16. drum. 17. vibrates. 18. Etna. 19. R.B. 21. hikers. 24. Ch. 25. Demosthenes. 30. Icarus. 32. roi *rev.* 34. oars *rev.* 35. sanatorium. 38. E.S.E. 40. inept. 41. mediator. 42. doses. 45. hunting. 47. N.Y. 48. parachutes.

DOWN.—1. indecision. 2. North. 3. amie *rev.* 4. R.N.V.R. 5, 6. nai, alb = (C)aliban. 7. tar. 8. Irak. 9. otte(r). 10. nier = rien. 11. ass. 13. mundane. 15. torso. 20. bosom. 21. cherish *rev.* 22. (m)oti(ve). 23. seasons. 26. spare *rev.* 27. mutter. 28. (po)se. 29. tern *rev.* 31. candy. 33. (B)ruin. 36. Hudi (bras) *rev.* 37. matt. 39. ergo. 43. po(sc). 44. S.A. 46. (Matt)ic.

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SCOTT CENTENARY EXHIBITION

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

BY TOREADOR

NEW ISSUES AND CHEAPER GREYHOUNDS—AUSTRALIAN CREDIT AND CONVERSIONS—RUSSIAN BILLS

THE embargo on new capital issues has been lifted in part and the first company to take advantage of the new epoch of cheaper money is Southend Stadium, which is promoting a dog-racing track. If the Southend Stadium had included a track for wild asses, it would have made sure of an immediate response from all investors who are critical of the muddle-headedness of the Government's financial policy. A conversion of over £2,000 millions of 5 per cent. War Loan to a 3½ per cent. stock was a great contribution to a trade revival. If cheaper long-term money had immediately been made available for industrial borrowers—at the moment when commodity and security markets were booming and business sentiment was bullish—the Government's conversion scheme might have worked a miracle. But for some unidentified reason (which may, after all, be a secret agreement with Australia) the Government clapped an embargo on the new issue market for the two precious months when everyone was talking of a trade recovery. What did it gain? At the end of July the amount of non-assented War Loan was some £235 millions. At the end of September, the amount to be redeemed in cash is declared to be £165 millions. The extra £70 millions of conversions were hardly worth the sacrifice of the entrepreneur's goodwill. Even so, the Treasury still forbids not only foreign issues but issues replacing existing loans which involve either underwriting or an invitation to the public to subscribe cash. In other words, the company who wishes to reduce its interest bill before it embarks on fresh capital enterprise is to find obstacles in its way. This sort of control of the capital market is imbecile. Meanwhile, the final result of the conversion scheme has somewhat disappointed the market which had banked on cash repayments of under £100 millions. The market is now pausing to take stock of its position and it will gradually realise that interest rates in this country are out of line with interest rates abroad. The normal method of correction would be for money to flow out of London to America and the Continent for investment in higher yielding securities. In spite of the depreciation of the pound sterling I expect this will happen by degrees.

* * *

The Australian conversion loan is a victory for both sides—borrower and lender: in other words, it is a compromise. The Commonwealth Government fought hard to obtain a 4 per cent. long-term loan at par. Its advisers in the City went so far as to persuade themselves that a 4½ per cent. stock at 98 would "go" with the investing public, but this was rejected with scorn. The Australian politician, encouraged by Ottawa to expect sacrifices of the British people, demanded better terms and threatened dreadful things if they were not secured. Now for a country which is governed very largely by amateur economists who read Mr. Keynes on the trend of long-term interest rates, I have great respect, but these threats were foolish and did Australia no good. The compromise was a 3½ per cent. five-year loan at 97½ with an option to the Commonwealth Government to repay at par on and after November 1st, 1936. The offer is made in Commonwealth Government stock to holders of the maturing £12,360,959 New South Wales 5¾ per cent. loan or to the public for cash up to the amount unconverted. The issue will be taken up by the banks and discount houses, if not by the private investor, for the market is ill-supplied with short-dated bonds of this type and the yield to redemption at the final date, being £4 1s. per cent., is not unattractive. The politicians in Australia will probably hail the issue as a triumph for Australian credit, but unwillingness to face realities is always a confession of weakness.

* * *

It is, of course, fatuous to expect, as some politicians do, that Australian Government stocks in London should yield little more than British Government stocks. Australia has a transfer problem. The official estimates of overseas trade for the year to June 30th, 1932, showed a balance in Australia's favour of £34 millions which covered the external obligations of the Governments and public authorities with about £7 millions to spare. But, as *The Economist* properly points out, this surplus was achieved by the abnormal process of forcibly reducing imports to one-third of what they were two years ago, so that the restoration of equilibrium in Australia's international account cannot be regarded as permanently assured unless and until there is a further recovery (say 30 per cent. from the present level) in the price of her staple exports. Another obvious difference between British and Australian funds. Great Britain has balanced her budget: Australian States have not. The French Government did not dare to demand a better credit than 4½ per cent., although its budget disequilibrium is not nearly as serious as that of New South Wales. The Commonwealth Government must not imagine that because it has ousted the bolshevik Mr. Lang from office in New South Wales it is entitled to the credit halo of the ex-National Government in Great Britain. Only a few months ago New South Wales 5 per cent. loan 1935-55 was quoted at 58 to yield £8 12s. 6d. per cent., and it is now quoted at 102½ to yield £4 18s. per cent. This is a lightning recovery for which the Australians should be very grateful.

* * *

One can sympathise with the Australian taxpayer. He has seen his domestic bonds forcibly converted into lower interest-bearing securities and on his own Stock Exchanges his Government credit is valued at about 4 per cent. In London he sees his Commonwealth Government stocks yielding 4½-4¾ per cent. and in New York 5¾ per cent. flat. No doubt he is puzzled, but he should remember that restrictions upon his own exchange and the depreciation of the British £ are checking the free outflow of capital which would automatically correct this disparity in interest yields. The truth of the matter is that there is no free market valuation of Australian Government credit. If conditions in the bond market in New York are artificial, so are conditions in the gilt-edged market in London during a new issue embargo. If pounds were to command more dollars, and if the new issue market were completely free, there is no doubt that Australian Government bonds would be yielding more in London and less in New York. The Commonwealth Government, in my opinion, would have been better advised to accept a long-term loan of 4½ per cent. at 98. It is always an advantage to a debtor country to keep its maturities as far distant as possible, and if a great popular success had been made of the first long-dated Australian conversion, the Commonwealth Government would have been able to proceed with a series of conversion loans on terms progressively more favourable to itself. Here are some high-interest Australian loans which are waiting to be tackled:—

£		Price.	Flat Yield % £ s. d.
15,000,000	Commonwealth 6% 1931–41	102½	5 17 4
2,980,400	New South Wales 5½% 1924–34	101½	5 8 4
4,901,233	New South Wales 5¾% 1925–35	102	5 12 9
6,427,465	New South Wales 6¼% 1930–40	102½	6 6 10
9,527,090	New South Wales 6% 1930–40	101	5 18 10
2,000,000	Queensland 6% 1930–40	103	5 16 6
2,982,500	South Australia 6½% 1930–40	102½	6 6 10
2,977,800	South Australia 6% 1930–40	101½	5 17 11
2,000,000	Tasmania 6½% 1930–40	102½	6 6 10
2,980,948	Victoria 5½% 1924–34	101½	5 8 4
3,906,800	Victoria 5½% 1930–40	101½	5 8 4
1,049,993	Western Australia 5½% 1930–40	101½	5 13 4

When all is well with Australian finance these loans will be standing at higher levels, giving redemption yields comparable with those obtainable on short-dated bonds.

* * *

A correspondent has written to protest against my suggestion that the Soviet Government may be forced to default on its bills this autumn. My argument was based on the idea that, as the Soviet Government is committed to a programme of purchases abroad which depend on her sales of raw materials abroad, the slump in the prices of the latter will upset its financing unless it is quick enough to cut down its purchases of the former. Frankly I suspected a muddle. My correspondent informs me that no such muddle exists, but he added a more convincing argument to the effect that any deficiency in the Russian international account can be made good by the export of gold. I am glad to hear that the Soviet reserves of gold are larger than is generally supposed and that the production of alluvial gold in Siberia is rapidly going ahead. A report (from non-Soviet sources) to the effect that a shipment of about £20 millions of gold has arrived at Riga en route for Berlin is not without interest, particularly as the shipment is supposed to include the current gold production from Siberia. My only regret is that the Soviet Government will be a supporter of the gold standard at the forthcoming World Economic Conference.

October 8, 1932

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

Supplement on the

Sino-Japanese Conflict

THE SINO-JAPANESE CONFLICT

THE following pages give a plain account of the Sino-Japanese conflict, what has been the part played by Great Britain, why it is impossible to isolate the handling of this conflict from the fate of disarmament and of economic co-operation and so from the vindication or collapse of the whole post-war system of collective responsibility for preserving peace. They were written—by a close student of and an independent authority on the Far Eastern question—on the eve of the publication of the Lytton Report. This Report has now been issued, and we are able, therefore, by way of preface to summarise its main findings and recommendations.

THE LYTTON REPORT

The Commission of Enquiry was appointed by the Council of the League of Nations in December, 1931, and it spent six months in the Far East investigating conditions on the spot, examining evidence and interviewing Chinese, Japanese and others. It consisted of a Frenchman, an Italian, an American, a German, and an Englishman, Lord Lytton.

They reject as entirely unsatisfactory two suggested solutions of the problem, namely, a restoration of the *status quo ante* September, 1931, on the one hand, and the maintenance and recognition of the State of Manchukuo, on the other. The first not only ignores the legitimate grievances of the Japanese, but would obviously invite a repetition of the trouble. The second is opposed alike to the interests of China, to the wishes of the people of Manchuria, and to the fundamental principle of existing international obligations. It is even questionable whether it would serve the permanent interests of Japan.

The general principles on which the solution ought to be based are put under ten heads:

(1) Compatability with the interests of both China and Japan.

(2) Consideration for the interests of the U.S.S.R.

(3) Conformity with the provisions of the Covenant of the League, the Kellogg Pact and the Nine-Power Treaty.

(4) Recognition of Japan's interests in Manchuria.

(5) Establishment of new treaty relations between China and Japan.

(6) Effective machinery for the settlement of future disputes.

(7) A large measure of autonomy for Manchuria, provided, however, that this does not infringe the sovereignty and administrative integrity of China. There should be a number of foreign advisers, including Japanese, attached to the autonomous government. The central Chinese Government should have control of general treaty and foreign relations and of the Customs, Post Office and Salt Gabelle.

(8) No other armed force in Manchuria except a gendarmerie to secure internal order and defence against external aggression.

(9) A new commercial treaty between China and Japan.

(10) International co-operation in the reconstruction of China.

Thus the Commission, whilst recognising the interests of the Japanese in Manchuria and the justice of their demand for an administration that will adequately protect that interest, condemns their military action and the erection of their puppet State. On the assumption that they will withdraw their forces, acknowledge the sovereignty of China over the Manchurian provinces, and liquidate Manchukuo, it suggests that the Council of the League should invite the two Governments to discuss a solution of the dispute. An Advisory Conference should be summoned to make detailed proposals for a special regime for the Three Eastern Provinces. The Conference might be composed of representatives of the Chinese and Japanese Governments and of the local population, and if agreed by the parties it might be assisted by "neutral observers." Should the conference fail to reach agreement on any point, the Council of the League should lend its aid and attempt to secure an agreed settlement. At the same time, there would be a separate discussion of the matters at issue between China and Japan relating to respective rights and interests. And the results of all these discussions and negotiations, it is proposed, should be embodied in four instruments—a Declaration by the Government of China constituting the special regime for Manchuria; a Sino-Japanese treaty dealing with Japanese interests; a Sino-Japanese treaty of Conciliation and Arbitration, Non-aggression and Mutual Assistance (in which the U.S.S.R. might, if it so desired, participate); and a Sino-Japanese Commercial treaty.

The Report ends by stressing the gravity of the present situation and the dangers that lie ahead, and insists that "whatever may be the details of future agreements . . . negotiations should be begun as soon as possible and should be conducted in a spirit of mutual confidence."

THE BACKGROUND OF THE CONFLICT

To appreciate the significance of the Far Eastern drama it is necessary to have some idea of the stage on which it is being played—Manchuria—and of the two chief actors, modern China and modern Japan.

China's three Eastern provinces—Heilungkiang, Fengtien and Kirin—together with the province of Jehol, are commonly known as Manchuria and Inner Mongolia and constitute a vast area, bigger than France and Germany combined, fertile in soil, rich in timber, mineral resources and coal, with arctic cold in winter and tropical heat in summer.

From time immemorial Manchuria has been linked with the destinies of the Chinese race, and has formed part of the principalities, kingdoms and empires thrown up by the Chinese and the tributary racial streams they have absorbed in the course of their long history. Chinese immigration into Manchuria began before the Christian era. To-day the population is nearly 30,000,000, of whom at least 93 per cent. are Chinese, and the rest Mongol nomads (600,000–700,000), Koreans (800,000), Japanese (230,000), and Russians (150,000). The handful of Manchus have lost their language and are virtually indistinguishable from their Chinese fellow-citizens. There is a heavy Chinese immigration, which of late years rose to nearly 1,000,000 annually.

The modern history of Manchuria began when Japan seized Korea from China in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894–95, and was balked of the Liaotung peninsula in South Manchuria only by the intervention of Russia, France and Germany. Russia thereupon acquired the

concessions Japan had coveted, and at the turn of the century built the Chinese Eastern Railway and opened the port of Dalny (Dairen). The Russo-Japanese war of 1904–05 followed and Japan took over the Russian lease of the Liaotung peninsula, including Dairen and all Russian concessions and privileges in South Manchuria as far as Chang Chun, with the corresponding portion of the C.E.R. (re-christened the South Manchurian Railway), the coal-mines at Fushun and various subsidiary enterprises.

The building of the C.E.R. gave a great stimulus to the immigration of Chinese peasants, particularly into North Manchuria, and this development was accelerated by the discovery of the valuable properties of the soya bean, and the springing up of a world demand for this product. The last twenty-five years have seen a tremendous agricultural development in Manchuria, on which the prosperity of these three Chinese provinces has been built. The Japanese have made a good thing of this development, as also of the coal mines, the railway and the other spoils of war taken from the Russians. But as regards their claim to be the creators of Manchurian prosperity—a claim uncritically echoed by our Conservative press—let us hear the testimony of Mr. E. F. Wilkinson, who was British Consul-General at Mukden from 1921 to 1928:

> No one will deny that the progress which Manchuria has made during the past twenty-five years has been mainly due to the development by the Chinese of its agricultural resources. That this development was only rendered possible by the construction of the Chinese Eastern and South Manchurian railways may be admitted, but both these railways were originally planned and built by the Russians, who also opened Dairen as a commercial port. The Japanese have merely carried on and extended the work initiated by the Russians, and while they have done so very efficiently, and with advantage to the trade of the territory as well as their own trade, the claim which they make to being the creators of the prosperity of Manchuria is absurd. Considering the extraordinary fertility of its soil and its great natural wealth, the steady increase since 1907 in the trade of Manchuria is in no way astonishing. It would have been far more rapid but for the preferential rights claimed by the Japanese, and, more especially, their veto on the employment of foreign capital other than Japanese in the construction of railways and the development of the mineral resources of the territory.*

As Mr. Wilkinson points out, Russia and Japan, the two most backward technically and poorest in capital of the Great Powers, joined forces soon after the Russo-Japanese war to preserve North and South Manchuria as their respective "spheres of influence" and to shut out all other Powers. The killing of the Sino-British Hsinmintun-Fakumen railway project in 1907 and the Sino-American Aigun-Chinchow scheme in 1909 are cases in point. The latter gave rise to Secretary of State Knox's so-called "neutralisation plan," by which China was to receive a foreign loan to buy up the Manchurian railways and administer them as one system, with the help, during the term of the loan, of nationals of the participating Powers. This also was defeated by Russo-Japanese opposition. Altogether there were four major and numerous minor diplomatic controversies over these issues. Japan also, in the negotiations of 1911–12 and 1918–20 over the China banking consortium, strongly objected to throwing Manchuria open to international loans, on the ground that this would imperil Japanese security. Japan's whole attempt to secure a monopolistic position in Manchuria has been based on alleged treaty rights (e.g., the right to forbid China to build railways "parallel" to the S.M.R., the militarisation of the S.M.R., the institution of Consular police, extra-territoriality for Koreans who have become naturalised Chinese), which in Chinese eyes are either not valid or interpreted one-sidedly and are contrary to the policy of the Open Door. The Chinese Government have frequently offered to submit these treaty issues to arbitration and the Japanese Government have always refused.

Under cover of the world-war and its aftermath Japanese policy was diversified by three acts of aggression on a grand scale—the occupation of Shantung, the "Twenty-One Demands," and the occupation of the Maritime Province of East Siberia, coupled with an attempt to secure control of the Chinese Eastern Railway. The first and the third of these enterprises proved unqualified failures; the second prolonged Japanese tenure of the South Manchurian Railway and Liaotung leased territory, and confirmed and extended on paper the monopolistic position Japan had acquired in practice. But it did so at the price of intensifying the struggle in Manchuria between Chinese nationalism and Japanese imperialism. The struggle grew still sharper when Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang, the governor of Manchuria, threw in his lot with the National Government at Nanking, and joined the Kuomintang or national revolutionary movement. That movement, started by Dr. Sun Yat-sen in Canton, spread first to Hankow, then to Nanking and Shanghai, and finally with the help of Marshal Chang reached Peking and brought China's Three Eastern Provinces (which comprise Manchuria) into the fold. This was a double blow, for not only did it mean the collapse of the policy of keeping China weak and divided, by playing off the various factions and cliques against each other and generally fomenting disorder—a policy which Japan had pursued in the North for many years with considerable success—but China bade fair to become united under a regime that stood for democratic, socialist and nationalist doctrines, for the modernising of the country and the ending of foreign privileges and concessions.

As though the political defeat were not enough, the economic battle also began to go against the Japanese. Twenty-five years of lavishly subsidised attempts to induce the Japanese to face the rigours of the Manchurian winter and Chinese competition had resulted in a mere two hundred thousand people scattered in towns and government offices along the railway line and at Dairen. Koreans made only a slightly better showing, and were politically unreliable anyway. State-aided Japanese and Koreans could not stand up to the unaided Chinese peasant.

And in wholesale and retail trade and banking the Chinese merchant, peddler and banker, with their cheap silver dollar, were beating the Japanese and his expensive gold yen. Worse still, the Chinese began opening mines, founding industries, and building railways. These railways were first built with Japanese money (which has never been paid back) and intended as feeders to the S.M.R. In the last few years the Chinese, to Japan's consternation, began building railways with Chinese money, linked them up with some of the intended "feeders" and used the whole system to compete with the S.M.R. and connect with a Chinese port at Hulutao which was being rapidly developed and bid fair to rival Dairen. The economic crisis hit Japan hard and her enterprises in Manchuria began to lose money, whereas the new Chinese railways ran at a profit.

To Japanese patriots, and especially to the military caste, the situation was alarming, both in Manchuria and at home. The rise of modern Japan, planned and guided from above in half a century, has been quasi-miraculous. But the builders of Japan tried to construct a modern state economically, militarily and technically, on the spiritual basis of Emperor-worship and within the political framework of absolutism. The result is a profound *malaise* throughout Japanese society. The social discontent was aggravated by the economic crisis, the intelligentsia and labour were riddled with Communism and other "dangerous thoughts," universal manhood suffrage had had to be granted, Japan's foreign policy was becoming liberal—co-operation with the West, League of Nations, disarmament, Nine-Power Treaty, friendship with China—and

* The *Spectator*, May 7th, 1932, p. 663; see also Mr. Wilkinson's article on "Japan and Manchuria" in the *Spectator* of April 16th, and Vol. VIII, No. 3, Parts I and II (April 13th and 20th, 1932) of the American Foreign Policy Association report on "Railway Rivalries in Manchuria between China and Japan," for a careful and rigorously impartial study of the matters discussed above.

there was a growing demand of Japanese Liberals that the Ministers for War and Navy should be appointed by and responsible to the Prime Minister like the rest of the Cabinet, instead of as now being ranking officers in active service responsible only to the Emperor and forming a sort of military caste, a State within the State, who, as in 1915 and last September, can present an ultimatum or start a war, facing their own Government as well as the rest of the world with accomplished facts.

What was wanted to stop the rot, said the Army, was an easy and popular military victory over China, the Twenty-One Demands over again on a majestic scale. They were convinced that Chinese resistance would collapse at the first show of force.

The Japanese Case

But, of course, the case for the military coup of twelve months ago and for what has followed was not based merely on the crude plea that might constitutes right. The Japanese could allege substantial grievances. They could and did protest that their treaty rights in Manchuria were being violated, their legitimate interests injured by Chinese chicane, obstruction or impotence to maintain order. The Chinese on their side might question the moral foundation of those treaty rights, or they might argue that they were doing their best in difficult circumstances. But the Japanese fears and complaints were not entirely groundless, and their demand for guarantees of better administration were justified. What cannot be justified, either legally or morally, is the high-handed methods they have adopted for securing their rights—and not merely for securing their rights, but for expanding them to cover a wholesale annexation of territory and a defiance of treaty obligations far more flagrant than anything of which China could be accused. Japan in Manchuria a year ago had some title to the sympathy of the world. Japan in Manchuria to-day is an outrage and a danger to the world.

The Outbreak and Course of the Conflict

The actual outbreak of last September was said by the Japanese to be due to the tearing up by Chinese soldiers of a couple of rails on the South Manchurian Railway on the night of September 18th, 1932. It is doubtful whether the incident ever occurred and it was, in any case, clearly only the flimsiest of pretexts for what followed. The Chinese denied it flatly, and asked for a neutral investigation. The evidence of reliable foreigners in Mukden at the time is that Japanese troop trains began arriving in the afternoon, whereas the alleged incident occurred at 10 p.m., and that there was not at any time any interruption of traffic on the line.

September, 1931

The first impulse of the Council last September was to apply the Covenant and League precedents by demanding that Japan should accept a neutral commission of inquiry on the spot and withdraw her troops to the railway zone as a preliminary to discussing the merits of the dispute. The Japanese wavered until the news came that Washington was opposed to this step and believed that the best course was to trust Baron Shidehara, the Foreign Minister of the then Liberal (Minseito) Government, who had won a high reputation at the Washington Conference.

The Japanese delegation at Geneva too were busy regretting the excesses of their military in a tone of frank apology, but insisting upon the disastrous results that would ensue if any pressure were exerted. There should be no time limit for withdrawal and no neutral inquiry, they said, and it would be found that the withdrawal, which had already begun, would be completed in a fortnight.

As the President of the Council put it to the Assembly on September 29th, the Japanese Government and its representative had informed the Council "that it never had or will have any intention of occupying Manchuria militarily."

The Council passed a non-committal resolution and hoped for the best.

October

By the middle of October it became clear that the Japanese troops, so far from withdrawal, were steadily advancing and practising a policy of terrorism that culminated in the bombardment of Chinchow. By this time, too, the Japanese demand in September that withdrawal should be subordinated to the security of their property and nationals had expanded into the assertion that there must be direct negotiations between China and Japan on certain unspecified fundamental principles before withdrawal could take place, on the ground that the excited state of public feeling must be allayed by an agreement between the Governments before it was safe to withdraw. After the Japanese had rejected a weak compromise the Council stiffened and submitted a draft to the parties which requested Japanese troops to withdraw to the railway zone before the next meeting of the Council, in three and a half weeks, recommended the parties to arrange the details of withdrawal and taking over in direct negotiations, and attached neutral observers to the Chinese authorities that were to take over. The resolution further specified that there should be no discussion on the merits of the dispute until withdrawal had been completed.

This resolution was accepted by China and rejected by Japan, after a hot debate in which the British and other Government Members of the Council made it perfectly clear that in their view to demand direct negotiations while Japanese troops were on Chinese soil constituted an attempt to reach a settlement under military pressure and was contrary to the Covenant. The fact that all the thirteen Members of the Council had voted against Japan made an enormous impression on Japanese public opinion.

November to December

Unhappily, however, the matter was not followed up as it should have been by energetic diplomatic representations at Tokio. On the contrary, the British and other Governments acted as though they had no responsibility for the policy adopted by their Foreign Ministers meeting in the Council. The excuse was that they must await the view of Washington on the Council resolution, and Washington kept them waiting nearly three weeks and then objected to the time limit. It did, however, in a Note to Tokio on November 5th, strongly endorse the position that Japanese troops should withdraw before there were any negotiations on the merits of the dispute.

The course that could and should have been followed at the November—December meeting of the Council in Paris was, therefore, clear. The Council should have re-enacted the substance of its October 22nd resolution, but substituting neutral judgment on the issue of when and on what conditions the Japanese troops should withdraw, for the fixed time limit to which America had objected. On these lines they could have taken full account of the special features of the situation, secured American agreement, and yet stood fast on the Covenant.

Instead, with the appearance of Sir John Simon and General Dawes at Paris, the Council abandoned the attempt to uphold the Covenant. The issue of withdrawal and the merits of the dispute were mixed up in an inextricable confusion. The Council dodged the whole question of the Japanese demand for direct negotiations under military pressure. They not only made no attempt to secure withdrawal of the Japanese troops, but put what pressure they could on the unhappy Chinese to evacuate the rest of Manchuria (Chinchow) to obviate the painful situation that would arise when the Japanese advanced to turn them out. The Council met in secret from start to finish, and did not

allow the Chinese delegate even to state his case in a public meeting.

In order to avoid the necessity for taking action the Council took the view that, under Article 11 of the Covenant, the League could take no action to preserve peace without the vote of both parties, thereby scrapping a report adopted by both Assembly and Council after years of labour and reducing Article 11 almost to insignificance. To stop the Chinese appealing under Article 10 they were told that, under this Article, the Council could not find that a State was guilty of external aggression unless the accused State voted against itself. In order to choke the Chinese off from appealing under Article 15, it was explained that to invoke this Article meant abandoning Article 11 and reducing the function of the Council to sending a commission of inquiry, without any power to take action for preserving peace, and meant, moreover, the cessation of American co-operation. In order to enforce these appeals the Chinese were told in a general way that if they attempted to invoke other articles of the Covenant the Members of the Council would wash their hands of the dispute in despair—in other words, would repudiate their treaty obligations.

In all the discussions of the Council, Great Britain took a decisive part as the only member of the League besides Japan which was a first-class Power in the Far East. Sir John Simon, after a preliminary flourish of trumpets in the Conservative press, explaining that his cool and capable mind had evolved a solution which would settle the whole matter on realistic lines, arrived in Paris with a scheme the essence of which was that China should give a written declaration, first to Japan and then to each of the Great Powers, that she would recognise all her treaty obligations in Manchuria and that there should be a mixed Sino-Japanese Commission with a neutral chairman to discuss railway issues, after which the Japanese might withdraw. The Chinese delegate pointed out that China had already formally notified the Council that, as a loyal member of the League, she was determined scrupulously to observe all her treaty obligations, was willing to submit any dispute about treaties with Japan to arbitration and, for this purpose, to set up a permanent conciliation commission and arbitral tribunal. He asked for a similar pledge from Japan. This information and the point made came as a complete surprise to the Foreign Secretary. Nothing daunted, however, Sir John Simon took his scheme to the Americans, and was bluntly told that the Nine-Power Treaty guaranteed the policy of the Open Door and that his proposal was dangerous from the point of view of the rights of the United States and of Great Britain. This also came as an entirely novel point of view to the Foreign Secretary. A few days later Washington curtly rejected his scheme, on the ground that it conceded too much to Japanese militarism. For the rest, General Dawes seemed anxious lest his chances as a presidential candidate should be impaired by too close co-operation with the League rather than that the League and America jointly should settle the dispute. His general line appeared to be that it would be a good thing if the League failed and America then stepped in and took charge (though this was not the State Department's view). The Paris meeting was only saved from complete disaster by the Japanese proposal, elicited under pressure from Washington on Tokio, to send a commission of inquiry to examine into the whole question of Sino-Japanese relations and recommend a solution. The resolution appointing the commission was careful to say that it had no mandate to interfere in any direct negotiations that might be started, nor in military operations, and the Japanese hedged their acceptance about with reservations that left them a free hand to advance and take Chinchow in the name of suppressing banditry.

January

This the Japanese immediately proceeded to do, encouraged by the abject attitude of the Council and undeterred by the fact that they had given specific pledges at Washington, London and Paris not to take Chinchow. Not satisfied with this, the Japanese attack on Shanghai was launched at the end of January. By this time, too, the Minseito Government had disappeared after the assassination of its Finance Minister, and was replaced by a "strong" Conservative, or Sliyukai, Government which was more to the Army's taste.

The capture of Chinchow at the end of December led to the American Note of January 7th to China and Japan, in which the United States Government pointed out that Japan's action had destroyed the last remaining Chinese administrative authority in South Manchuria and stated that in view of this situation and of its own rights and obligations therein, the American Government deemed it to be its duty to notify the parties:

> that it cannot admit the legality of any situation *de facto* nor does it intend to recognise any treaty or agreement entered into between those Governments or agents thereof which may impair treaty rights of the United States or its citizens in China, including those which relate to the sovereignty, the independence or the territorial and administrative integrity of the Republic of China or the international policy relative to China commonly known as the Open-Door policy, and that it does not intend to recognise any situation, treaty or agreement which may be brought about by means contrary to the covenants and obligations of the Pact of Paris of August 27th, 1928, to which treaty both China and Japan as well as the United States are parties.

It was made clear from Washington that the American Government hoped Great Britain would adopt a similar attitude. Instead, on January 11th, the Foreign Office published a communiqué stating that, in view of the fact that the Japanese delegate at the Council meeting in Paris had promised Sir John Simon that Japan would respect the Open Door in Manchuria, the British Government did not consider it necessary to associate itself with the American *démarche*. This communiqué caused painful astonishment at Washington, as it seemed to indicate that Great Britain, at the very time she was supposed to be putting pressure on Japan to evacuate Chinese territory, was bargaining with the aggressor as to facilities for British trade in the territory illegally seized and was simply ignoring the overriding obligation in the Nine-Power Treaty to respect China's sovereignty, independence and territorial and administrative integrity.

February

The fighting at Shanghai rapidly developed into a miniature war, with some 50,000 Japanese troops engaged against an even larger number of Chinese. The populous Chinese quarter of Chapei was reduced to smoking ruins by aeroplane bombs—much as if a whole quarter of London had been wiped out in peace time by a flock of bombing planes—and some 16,000 civilians, men, women and children, were slaughtered, while about one hundred million pounds' worth of property was destroyed. This brought a strong statement in the Council meeting on February 2nd from the British delegate, who at the time happened to be Mr. J. H. Thomas. He said the situation in the Far East was war in everything but name and could not be suffered to continue without bringing the Covenant, the Nine-Power Treaty and the Paris Pact into disrepute.

A "Five-Point" programme was put forward by the Great Powers to the parties, providing for the cessation of hostilities and the negotiation of a settlement with neutral intermediaries. The Chinese promptly accepted and the Japanese rejected this proposal. The fighting was intensified.

Meanwhile, Washington had issued a statement that America was merely mediating and offering its good offices and that there was no thought of any kind of ultimatum to Japan. Sir John Simon at Geneva also overflowed with the milk of human kindness, and what was believed to be a new and firm attitude by the British Government was quickly revealed as a piece of bluff which the Japanese had promptly called.

On February 16th the Members of the Council, except the parties, issued an appeal to Japan, drawing attention to her special responsibilities as a great civilised Power, regretting that she had not found it possible to make full use of the methods of peaceful settlement provided in the Covenant, recalling the obligation of the Pact of Paris to seek the solution of a dispute only by peaceful means, and drawing attention to Article 10 of the Covenant and the obligations Japan had assumed under the Nine-Power Treaty. This was the first time that the Council had abandoned the pretence of treating both parties as if their position *vis-à-vis* the League were the same. As the delegate of one of the smaller Powers on the Council remarked, with a great sigh of relief, when emerging from this meeting: "This is the first time I haven't felt ashamed of myself since October."

However, the respite was but momentary. Japan replied in a stiff Note complaining of the irregularity of the procedure by which twelve Members of the Council instead of the Council as a whole had taken action, contending that the Covenant did not apply to a country in a state of chaos like China, and at the same time protesting against the suggestion that she had not scrupulously fulfilled all her obligations under the Covenant; the Japanese Government further stated that it was at a loss to understand the reference to Article 10, that it had throughout acted in self-defence, and drew attention to the Chinese boycott and the anti-Japanese agitation in China which it said was a violation of the Paris Pact; the Note concluded by objecting with dignity to the Members of the Council invoking the Nine-Power Treaty since they were not all signatories thereof. The Council thought it prudent not to reply to this Note, for to do so would have meant a rupture.

About this time, too, Mr. Sato, the Japanese delegate, announced to the Council the setting up of Manchukuo, with Japanese help, and added that Japan had such great investments in Manchuria that she could not tolerate any government in that territory which she considered inimical to her interests. The Council thought it prudent not to comment on this statement either.

In the meantime the Japanese delegate had proposed to Sir John Simon that the Great Powers should hold a Round Table conference at Shanghai to discuss their interests, i.e., not to put too fine a point upon it, to use the situation created by Japanese aggression to secure the perpetuation and extension of foreign privileges at Shanghai. Sir John Simon accepted this proposal with alacrity, but was forced by American pressure to modify it somewhat before bringing it to the notice of the President of the Council, M. Paul-Boncour, who put it forward as a Council plan for—

(a) cessation of hostilities, and

(b) a Round Table conference.

China and Japan both assented to the plan and China immediately accepted the armistice terms offered by Admiral Kelly on the British flagship at Shanghai. Japan, while accepting the plan, rejected the armistice terms, brought up heavy reinforcements and launched a bloody offensive in the teeth of the entreaties of all the Members of the Council at a public meeting. It was moving but farcical to hear State after State on the Council, with one eye on the clock—for all knew the hour at which the publicly announced Japanese ultimatum would expire—imploring the Japanese not to redden the ground with blood, when all knew that the Japanese Government, in spite of having ostensibly accepted the League plan for the cessation of hostilities, was immovably determined to carry out its offensive, and confident that the Council would not lift a finger.

By this time the Chinese Government had invoked Articles 10 and 15 of the Covenant and asked for the dispute to be transferred to the Assembly. This step was taken in spite of the strongest pressure that Sir John Simon could bring to bear upon the Chinese, and our Foreign Secretary was at no pains to conceal his displeasure that the Assembly had been summoned.

March

The Japanese were determined to break the Chinese line before the Assembly met, and the *Temps* in Paris and the *Times* in London explained approvingly that, of course, Japan must have a military victory and so satisfy her prestige before she could consent to the cessation of hostilities. It was common knowledge both at Geneva and at Shanghai that the Japanese were straining every nerve to break the Chinese line before the Assembly met. And because flesh and blood and machine guns cannot indefinitely stand against heavy artillery, tanks and aeroplanes, the Chinese line was indeed driven back the day the Assembly met, after putting up a fight that astounded the world.

M. Paul-Boncour opened the Extraordinary Assembly with the great news that peace was in sight; no one was ill-bred enough to mention the Japanese offensive.

Meanwhile the United States Government had communicated to the League the text of a letter from Mr. Stimson to Senator Borah, in which the United States made it clear that the Nine-Power Treaty crystallised the American policy of thirty years towards China, rather pointedly referred to the fact that Lord Balfour had publicly announced in the most formal manner that Great Britain adhered to this Treaty and had abandoned the policy of spheres of interest in China, and drew attention to the connection between the Far Eastern conflict, disarmament and world peace.

The letter concluded by stating emphatically that the situation in the Far East was incompatible with the Nine-Power Treaty and the Paris Pact and would never have arisen if these treaties had been observed, and adding that there was no evidence that a due compliance with them

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would have interfered with the adequate protection of the legitimate rights in China of the signatories of the treaties and their nationals. A reference was then made to the American Note of January 7th and the hope was expressed that other Governments would adopt a similar attitude.

Soon after, Mr. Stimson himself came to Geneva. There was a sharp struggle in the Assembly as to whether it should concern itself actively with the whole dispute or only with Shanghai. Sir John Simon was in favour of the latter course; so were the Japanese. There was a further struggle as to whether the Great Powers should be allowed to use the situation at Shanghai in order to obtain fresh privileges from China, or whether the League should insist upon the Japanese troops withdrawing unconditionally. Sir John Simon was in favour of the former course, and so were the Japanese.

The resolution of March 4th, referring to the Council plan and asking the naval, military and civilian authorities of the Great Powers to help the Chinese and Japanese to negotiate the terms of Japanese withdrawal, was the first fruit of this struggle and represented a victory in principle for the smaller Powers and America, who were against the extortion of political concessions from the Chinese as the price of Japanese withdrawal.

The March 11th resolution was the second result and also represented a victory for the more liberal forces in the Assembly. It declares specifically that the Assembly was seised of the whole conflict, that any settlement under military pressure is contrary to the Covenant, and commits the Assembly to the doctrine that no situation or treaty of a nature or achieved by means contrary to the Covenant or the Paris Pact can be recognised as effectual or valid.

The next task of the Assembly was to appoint a Committee to carry on the negotiations in its name on the basis of its resolution. Here again there was a sharp struggle, the British Government producing a list of Powers carefully selected for their inertia during the League's dealings with this matter hitherto. The smaller Powers produced a list of States that had stood up for the principles of the Covenant. The two lists came into conflict rather dramatically when the smaller Powers put forward South Africa as a candidate in view of the strong speech made by the South African delegate in the Assembly, and Great Britain produced a list containing Portugal but not South Africa. In the end, most of the smaller Powers' list came in, but Portugal defeated South Africa by one vote: that vote was Sir John Simon's contribution to Empire unity. In principle the smaller Powers had won. But now Mr. Stimson, whose presence in Geneva had much encouraged them, left for America. When it came to applying the principles in practice, the British Government won some striking victories. The Committee of Nineteen was forced into secret session and denied to the Chinese delegate the right to state his case because the Japanese had announced that they did not recognise the claim of the Assembly to deal with the question and would refuse to appear before the Assembly Committee. We did not want to pick up this challenge, and so the Committee went underground and its President approached the parties.

April

Finally, the Committee submitted a resolution to the parties providing that there should be neutral judgment as to when there was sufficient safety for Japanese lives and property in Shanghai to allow the Japanese troops to withdraw (Japanese property, it may be remarked, had been destroyed in the fighting, and Japanese subjects had been evacuated to Japan). Sir John Simon, after some protests, had accepted this principle, partly because he found it difficult in a League Committee to resist the argument that if he objected to a time limit for withdrawal—as he had—he could not also object to neutral judgment without leaving it to the Japanese military to decide for themselves how long they wished to stay on Chinese soil; and partly because he had been led to believe by the Japanese delegate that Japan would accept the proposed formula. The Chinese, of course, accepted it at once, and the Japanese, as might equally have been expected, rejected the proposal with indignation, explaining that under their constitution it was the duty of the military to their Emperor to decide for themselves all questions relating to Japanese security.

Sir John Simon was now in a difficulty, but got out of it by first of all holding the Committee up for several days until he had devised a fresh formula with his Japanese friends, and then putting strong pressure on the Chinese at Shanghai to accept the said formula. This new formula, suggested by Mr. Shigemitsu, the Japanese Minister, was deliberately ambiguous as to whether there should be Japanese or neutral judgment on the time of withdrawal, but was recommended to the Chinese Government by the British Government on the ground that the Assembly resolution had been drafted under pressure from the smaller Powers who had no responsibilities in the East and did not understand the situation, and was useless as a basis of agreement, since the Japanese would never accept it. The fresh formula, however, being proposed informally by the Japanese themselves, had every chance of achieving the desired agreement.

Other arguments of an equally pressing nature finally induced the Chinese to accept the new formula, and the new situation having then been brought by our Foreign Secretary to the notice of the Committee, the latter duly changed its former resolution. It was understood at the time that the Japanese would stay at Shanghai at least six months and that the Chinese would have to pay something in political concessions over the International Settlements to get rid of them. A month later, however, to everyone's surprise, the whole Japanese army was withdrawn: the guerilla warfare in Manchuria had reached such proportions that most of these troops had to be shipped direct to Dairen, and the cost and unpopularity of the Shanghai adventure were such that the Japanese Army could not afford to remain there.

The Round Table conference (as distinguished from the armistice discussions) was never held.

As regards Manchuria the Assembly temporised under pressure from the Great Powers on the ground that it must await the Lytton Report. It did, however, not only declare in its resolution that it was seised of the whole conflict under Article 15, but asked the parties to provide information on the steps taken to carry out the Council resolutions of September 30th and December 10th. The information thus received—the Japanese Note being addressed to the Council and containing merely a general description of what had taken place in Manchuria—was transmitted by the Committee of Nineteen to the Assembly without comment.

Meanwhile there had been a fresh outburst of assassinations and bomb throwing in Japan by young army and navy officers. The Prime Minister was killed and the Government fell and was replaced in due course by a coalition or national Government, which was a mere tool of the army and navy—or rather of the senior officers controlling the War Office and the Admiralty, for a distinction must be made between the higher ranks who, granted their militarist premises, are cool headed and realistic, and the junior officers grouped in the super-patriotic secret "blood" societies of various kinds, who are for a revolutionary dictatorship at home and cherish grandiose dreams of conquest and world power abroad.

August

The next important development was a speech by Secretary of State Stimson, on August 8th, which was circulated a fortnight in advance to all American legations and transmitted by them to the governments and press of

the countries to which they were accredited. In this speech Mr. Stimson pointed out that the Paris Pact had abolished neutrality, for war now became not only an injury to the whole community in view of the interdependence of modern nations, but was also a breach of a solemn treaty obligation.

The Pact, said Mr. Stimson, allowed for the right of self-defence, but he was confident that "a nation which sought to mask an imperialistic policy under the guise of the defence of its nationals would soon be unmasked."

Since the coming into force of the Pact the United States had used it as a basis for a policy of mobilising public opinion against disturbers of the peace. In the Sino-Japanese conflict the United States had co-operated with the League to try to end this conflict by conciliation.

> Finally, when, in spite of these efforts, Japan had occupied all of Manchuria, the American Government formally notified both that country and China, on January 7th, 1932, that it would not recognise any situation, treaty, or agreement which might be brought about by means contrary to the Covenant and obligations of the Pact of Paris. Subsequently, on March 11th, this action of the American Government was endorsed by the assent of the League of Nations, at a meeting in which 50 nations were represented. On that occasion, under circumstances of the utmost formality and solemnity, a resolution was adopted unanimously, Japan alone refraining from voting, in which the Assembly declared that "it is incumbent upon the members of the League of Nations not to recognise any situation, treaty or agreement which will be brought about by means contrary to the Covenant of the League of Nations or to the Pact of Paris."

On August 25th Count Uchida, the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs, delivered a speech in the Diet announcing the imminent recognition of Manchukuo and explaining that Japan had throughout acted in self-defence, that Manchukuo was the result of a genuine separatist movement, and that therefore neither the Nine-Power Treaty nor the Paris Pact had been violated by Japan. He drew a glowing picture of the sturdy and healthy progress of Manchukuo, and contrasted it with the disorders in China.

> As the anti-foreign, especially anti-Japanese, movement still continues unabated further complications are likely to arise in the foreign relations of China which in turn will make her internal confusion worse confounded.

This significant threat—for it is no less and should be read in connection with the strained situation on the borders of Jehol province, and the conviction of the Chinese that the Japanese army are preparing to occupy Tientsin and attack Peking—was followed by the assurance that Japan,

> always conscious of the general interest of the Far East, will spare no effort to afford all possible assistance to China. Indeed, it is my earnest hope that the day is not far distant when Japan, Manchukuo and China, as three independent powers closely linked together by bonds of culture and racial affinities, will co-operate hand in hand for the maintenance and advancement of the peace and prosperity of the Far East, as well as for the peace of the world and the civilisation of mankind.

To this speech the Chinese Foreign Minister, Dr. Lo Wen-kan, replied, on August 29th, that Japan had now cast off the mask and openly revealed her scheme of aggression in China.

If Japan's interpretation of the Paris Pact were accepted by the other sixty-one signatory Powers the whole document would be a sham, and the nations renouncing war as an instrument of national policy would have reserved the right to fight an aggressive war on the territory of a neighbour. As for Manchukuo, the whole world knew that it was a puppet organisation created and supported by Japan herself.

So far from the puppet Manchukuo State making "sturdy and healthy progress" guerilla fighting was growing day by day throughout the three provinces, commerce and industry were steadily declining, and the plight of the country was worse than it had ever been. There would be no peace and prosperity in China's eastern provinces until Japanese troops had been withdrawn and the Chinese Government had regained control over the territory temporarily lost.

Dr. Lo Wen-kan said he would not deny that China had many and grave domestic difficulties and was suffering like the rest of the world from the economic crisis. China had also been hard hit by the unprecedented floods.

> Under such circumstances we had believed that the Japanese people, like every other nation, would have shown us the greatest sympathy and would have given us at least moral help in our stupendous task of rehabilitation. That Japan should take advantage of China's internal difficulties, and launch a premeditated scheme of military aggression yet unheard of in the annals of the modern world was indeed beyond human conjecture.

Japan had now defied the whole world and it was for the world to pronounce final judgment. Neither the Chinese Government nor people were in the least anti-foreign in sentiment, but they could not be expected to cherish very cordial feelings toward the Japanese in the present circumstances. The following were cardinal points of Chinese policy:

> (1) China will never surrender one inch of her territory, nor any of her sovereign rights under stress of military force, which she condemns, and is determined to resist to the best of her ability.
>
> (2) China will never agree to any solution for the present situation which takes into account the puppet organisation in the Three Eastern Provinces, established, maintained and controlled by the Japanese military forces.
>
> (3) China is confident that any reasonable proposal for the settlement of the present situation will be necessarily compatible with the letter and spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations, the Anti-War Pact, the Nine-Power Treaty, as well as with China's sovereign power, and will also effectively secure everlasting peace in the Far East.

September

On September 15th a Protocol was signed between Manchukuo and the Japanese Government by which Manchukuo agreed to confirm and respect all existing Japanese rights in Manchuria, private as well as public, and:

> Japan and Manchukuo, recognising that any threat to the peace and order of either of the High Contracting Parties constitutes at

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the same time a threat to the safety and existence of the other, agree to co-operate in the maintenance of this national security; it will be understood that such Japanese forces as may be necessary for this purpose will be stationed in Manchukuo.

With the signing of this Protocol Manchukuo became a State recognised by Japan.

This fact and the text of the Protocol, together with the text of Count Uchida's speech referred to above, were communicated by the Japanese Government to the League of Nations on September 16th, as well as the statement by the Japanese Government on the occasion of recognition, promising the Open Door in Manchuria and expressing the hope that the other Powers would not long delay in establishing diplomatic relations with Manchukuo.* The statement reiterated the Japanese Government's declaration that it harboured no territorial designs in Manchuria and pointed to the preamble of the Protocol as proof that both the contracting Powers will mutually respect each other's territorial rights.

On September 17th the Chinese Government sent a note to the President of the Assembly, declaring that since September 18th, 1931:

> Japan has openly and ruthlessly pursued a policy of violence and intrigue in China with the object of realising her long-cherished ambition to detach the Three Eastern Provinces from China. In carrying out this policy Japan's acts successively increased in gravity, culminating in the recent formal recognition of the so-called Manchukuo.
>
> By the agreement with the puppet Government, Japan, following the precedent of her policy in Korea, has established a virtual protectorate over Manchuria as a step towards annexation. If, as reported, the agreement gives Japan the right to station troops in and defend Manchukuo, the immediate danger of such a situation to the peace of the world in general and of the Far East in particular is too evident to need any explanation.

* The Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Manchukuo, who is a Japanese (the Minister for Foreign Affairs is a Formosan Chinese and a Japanese subject), has since explained that the Open Door applies only to subjects of Powers that recognise Manchukuo.

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The Chinese Government had in repeated communications to the League made clear the nature of the puppet organisation forcibly set up in Manchuria by the Japanese army of occupation.

The note then quoted Mr. Stimson's speech on August 8th concerning non-recognition as showing the attitude to which both the members of the League and the United States are committed, namely, the so-called policy of non-recognition, and adds:

> The Chinese Government remains as ever ready to discuss an equitable solution of the conflict and welcomes the report of the Commission of Enquiry as an indispensable aid to that end.
>
> But in the circumstances it appears to the Chinese Government that the time has come for considering what action should be taken by the League to uphold the sanctity of the treaties by which all of its members are bound, and notably the obligation to respect and preserve China's territorial integrity and existing political independence against external aggression.

Summary

The issue is thus clearly drawn. Looking back on the twelve months of the dispute it is plain that the divergence between Japan and the League has steadily widened, though the magnitude of the issue at stake is even now only imperfectly realised by public opinion. It is generally admitted to-day that if the League had been firmer last autumn the dispute would by now have been settled. Viscount Cecil, who was the British delegate, or deputy delegate, during most of this period, has strongly expressed this view, and it is indeed almost a truism to-day.

In retrospect again there can be no reasonable doubt in the light of subsequent events that the Japanese position at Shanghai was untenable and that the League could have taken a far stronger line than it did and called the Japanese bluff. If it had done so, and the Japanese Government had been compelled to accept the principle of neutral judgment or else to face a breach with the League on an issue and in circumstances where its own public opinion would have brought it down, then we should again have been in sight of the end of the Sino-Japanese conflict.

It is also clear that the United States bears a heavy responsibility for the feebleness and vacillation of the League during the first months. There is reason to believe that this is realised and deeply regretted by the State Department. Apart from opposing the Commission of Enquiry, sitting on the fence over the October resolution and being badly served by General Dawes in Paris, the United States has throughout crippled its own efforts and handicapped the League by its awkward relation to that institution. It is not too much to say that the dispute would have been settled in three weeks had the United States been a member of the League. The chief asset of Japanese diplomacy has been playing on the differences between America and the League and on the difficulty of getting full and free discussion. Throughout, the American attitude has been to wait for the Council or Assembly to come to a decision before stating whether the United States would concur, instead of taking an active part in intimate discussion in the framing of that decision. The result has been to leave the League groping and guessing in the dark and to allow those members of the League who wished to do nothing to blame their inactivity on the American difficulty.

But it must also be recognised that from the beginning the United States has encouraged the League to go to the limit of its power and authority, has in general terms promised to co-operate independently but cordially, and since January has been adopting a stiffer and clearer attitude.

The British Government, on the other hand, which started out with good intentions, slumped badly in November and has ever since pursued a policy which is so feeble as to have given rise to the universal suspicion that it is dishonest. The fact that Great Britain is the only Power

with first-class interests in the Far East that is a member of the League besides Japan imposes an immense responsibility upon our Government, and its action or inaction has throughout been crucial for the League. France and Italy have played second fiddle from the outset of the dispute and have never offered any serious opposition to any course the British Government wished to pursue. The decisive importance of our action naturally made caution necessary in taking decisions, and so long as Great Britain as a member of the League was actively trying to mediate and conciliate it was naturally more difficult for her than for the United States, standing somewhat apart, to speak her mind freely. But even with the fullest allowance for these factors it is impossible to pretend that British policy has been anything but a failure.

THE PRESENT SITUATION

In Manchuria

After twelve months of struggle Japan has overrun the whole of Manchuria and recognised Manchukuo. Manchuria itself has become practically an armed camp. The Preliminary Report of the Lytton Commission in the spring mentioned that there were some 140,000 men of various denominations in arms against the Japanese, and since then the numbers have grown. At first Japan raised and trained Chinese troops and attempted to send them into the field in the name of Manchukuo against their Chinese brethren. Several crack units promptly deserted to the insurgents, bringing with them the most up-to-date Japanese training and equipment; others contented themselves with firing in the air; none of them fought. Consequently, the Japanese had to do their own fighting and the number of troops in Manchuria was steadily increased to 80,000. In the middle of September the press announced that another division was going to Manchuria to "relieve" some of the troops already there. (This is the consecrated formula—the troops relieved also stay.)

Fengtien province, which used to pay eighty million dollars in annual revenue, has not come anywhere near paying the seven million dollars called for by the financial programme of Manchukuo. Revenue from taxes in Southern Manchuria has diminished by 74 per cent., and in Northern Manchuria by nearly 90 per cent. This is because, in the almost universal disorder and fighting, the crops have not been sown. According to Japanese economists, this year's harvest will be only 40 per cent. of last year's. These calculations were made before the devastating floods in North Manchuria, affecting eight million people and practically wiping out the crops in the most fertile part of the country. Famine conditions exist over large areas. The soya bean trade and the industry of extracting oil from the soya bean have practically died out. The currency has lost all value. The loans secretly and indirectly contributed by the Japanese Government have been mere drops in the ocean. The Central Bank of Manchukuo, which was launched with a great flourish of trumpets, quickly got through the twenty million yen lent by Japan, but proved incapable of stabilising the currency. The appalling conditions in Manchuria have led to such a drop in foreign trade that the Customs and postal services seized by Manchukuo, instead of yielding a golden harvest as expected, constitute a heavy financial burden. As the Harbin *Nichi Nichi*, one of the chief Japanese papers in Manchuria, remarks: "The position in Manchuria has become so bad that it is impossible to hope for a quick development of Japanese or any other economic activity. For the moment we must work to build up the shattered foundations of economic life, in the first place, of agriculture and finance."

It is not surprising in the circumstances that the numerous delegations of Japanese business men, headed by the great firms (Mitsui, Mitsubishi, etc.), which have the closest connections with the army and navy and control almost the whole of Japanese industry, should have proved very shy of the pressing invitations from the army to invest money in Manchuria. As an important Japanese economist, who requested that his name should not be revealed, declared the other day in the *North China Daily News*: "No one would be mad enough to risk his money in Manchuria so long as the volunteer movement which has spread all over Manchuria has not been stamped out and the sources from which the volunteers draw support traced and eliminated."

Japanese army authorities in Manchuria estimate that it will take them five to seven years to restore order. The Japanese Delegate in the Council has mentioned ten years. The Chinese are confident that they can keep Manchuria in an uproar indefinitely; in any case, they say, long before five years the Chinese boycott (95 per cent. of Japan's foreign investments are in China and they are all losing money heavily as a result of the boycott) will bankrupt Japan.

In Japan: The Economic Situation

In Japan itself the yen, which was forced off the gold standard at an early stage of the conflict, has sunk to less than one-half its par value and is still sinking; Japanese securities, for the first time in history, are lower than Chinese, and the Government is at its wits' end how to pay the short term foreign loans that will fall due this year and next; its credit is too bad, and its unpopularity too great, to warrant a prolongation or renewal of these loans. Revenue from taxation has dropped sharply in the last year and is still dropping; savings bank deposits are shrinking rapidly; there is a gaping budget deficit; the trade balance is unfavourable by 230 million yen, not counting the vast unregistered foreign purchases by the Ministries for War and the Navy, and the agricultural

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crisis has produced indescribable conditions: in whole provinces the peasantry are living on grass roots, cattle feed and fish entrails used for fertiliser, selling their daughters to houses of prostitution and dying of starvation. Of the two staple crops, the market price of rice has sunk to less than the cost of production, and raw silk fetches only one-third of what it costs to produce. The indebtedness of the peasantry is about six and a half milliard yen at a rate of interest varying between 10 and 40 per cent. The amount due in interest per year is about equal to the value of the total annual agricultural production of Japan. To this must be added the crushing burden of taxation, of which between 50 and 60 per cent. goes to war purposes, apart from the heavy subsidies and exemption from taxation for industries of military importance (pig-iron, steel, shipping and shipbuilding, chemical industries). Most of the resources for this policy are ultimately derived from the agrarian population through direct and indirect taxation. Taxes have multiplied from four to five times as compared with the pre-war level.

Public Opinion

It is not surprising that the countryside is the scene of almost continuous rent strikes, riots and bloody conflicts between starving peasants on the one side and land-owners and usurers on the other. Although Japan is an agricultural country, she also has large industries, and Japanese labour is riddled with Communism and extreme socialist thought (all Western communist literature is translated into Japanese as fast as it appears, whereas more moderate sociological works find a small market). The intelligentsia, particularly the teachers, are also heavily tainted with extreme radicalism.

Since the conflict began Europe and America have been inundated by Japanese pacifists, Quakers and internationalists of every kind, who have been telling all who will listen how utterly they deplore and abhor the policy on which their militarists have embarked, but at the same time entreat the West not to oppose the militarists in any way, for this would only further exasperate them and rouse the whole nation to a pitch of blind fanaticism. The exponents of this view are undoubtedly perfectly sincere, for, like most Japanese, they are naive and childlike in political matters and stand in such awe of their own militarists, and are such hearty believers in the flattering legend of the Samurai spirit, Bushido, etc., that they are blind to the realities of modern Japan.

But there is no reason why the more sophisticated Westerner should accept these stories at face value. The starving Japanese peasant as he eats his rotten fish-gut and thinks of his daughter in the nearest Yoshiwara is not worrying about Bushido. The morale of the Japanese will crack the moment they begin to believe that their policy will fail.

In China

As for China, the conflict coming on top of the devastating floods has hit the country very hard, weakened the Government, drained its resources, caused a sum total of human suffering about which it is best not to think, and given an impetus to Communism in the interior. But the National Government has stood up astonishingly to the strain. The stubborn resistance at Shanghai produced a great uprush of national sentiment, and for a moment caused distracted China to forget her divisions and dissensions. That mood has passed, but there are no signs of any weakening, and indeed no Chinese Government could survive for five minutes which attempted to compromise with Japan on the basis of losing Manchuria. The problem of the National Government is to consolidate and extend its authority, and it can do this only by leading the national resistance against Japanese aggression and giving confidence in its capacity to improve the condition of the people.

Chinese confidence in ultimate victory is grounded on the fact that the Chinese are a nation of four hundred millions —one-quarter of the whole of humanity—with a history of four thousand years, during which they have absorbed or worn down innumerable would-be conquerors. They believe that the boycott and the guerilla warfare in and around Manchuria will bankrupt Japan and force her into revolution. They believe they have the forces of history on their side—the more wanton Japan's aggression becomes, the higher and brighter will burn the flame of China's national spirit, and the more China resists, the stronger will become her international position and the regard in which she is held by the world. They have with them the commitments and the causes on which the civilised world has pinned its hope of peace. There are many Chinese who say that Japan is actually rendering them a service by rousing and uniting China, while the Japanese people, under the heel of a feudal military caste, will find that the farther Japan goes in her present policy, the more formidable will be the forces aroused against her both at home and abroad. The ultimate downfall of the military caste at the hands of their own people and in face of gathering world disapproval they believe to be certain.

The Choice in China

But the present National Government has adopted the policy of co-operation and friendship with the West, and is continually attacked for not offering more active military resistance and for not turning for help to Russia. If in the face of Japanese recognition of Manchukuo and repudiation of the Lytton Report the Western Powers remain supine and acknowledge that treaties are scraps of paper and force the supreme arbiter, more violent counsels are likely to prevail. If China is abandoned by the West its present Government will go under and Chinese nationalism will win in the end, but by more tortuous and bloodier courses; the nationalism that will then ultimately emerge will be the enemy and not the friend of the West.

The Lytton Report

The Lytton Report will not be discussed at Geneva until the latter half of November. The solution it offers must be based on the Covenant and on the Nine-Power Treaty, i.e., on the continuance of effective Chinese sovereignty over what these Treaties guarantee as Chinese territory. This means that Japan is likely to reject, and China to accept, whatever recommendations the Assembly makes under para. 4 of Article 15 on the basis of the Lytton Report.

It may be assumed that the Japanese Government will make strong efforts to get the League to accept this situation. For the Japanese higher ranks (as distinguished from the junior officers) are reluctant to contemplate a break between Japan and the League. They prize Japan's position as a Permanent Member of the Council because in their eyes it consecrates her prestige as a great Power, on equal terms with other countries, to be consulted on all world questions. They are fully aware of the opportunities for bargaining and blackmail this gives Japan, and they fear that China and the Western Powers through the League might get on too well together in Japan's absence. Above all, they fear the effect of isolation on Japanese finance and public opinion and the exposure of the hollowness of the bluff that Japan is united in her determination to defy the whole world.

The Attitude of Great Britain

To what extent can the Japanese Government count on British support? The argument will be used that if Japan goes out of the League there is no way of restraining her, whereas if she stays in it is still possible to use moral influence. Time will ultimately defeat Japan, but it is no use irritating the Japanese militarists by open opposition. In any case, there is no obligation under Article 15 on the

parties to accept a League report, and the most that the League can do in the circumstances is to give them three or five years to consider the matter. This view ignores the whole question of Japanese aggression and makes a scrap of paper of Article 10, which is regarded as the keystone of the Covenant.

The Nine-Power Treaty and the United States

Another popular suggestion is that the League should ask for the summoning of a conference of the signatories to the Nine-Power Treaty. This is merely an attempt to put the responsibility on the United States. All the signatories of the Nine-Power Treaty except the United States are Members of the League and under the Covenant have obligations that go much farther than the Nine-Power Treaty. The United States would certainly object to any proposal of the kind mentioned, for, from the American point of view, the maximum results can be got by the combined obligations and signatories of all three Treaties involved—the Covenant, the Paris Pact and the Nine-Power Treaty.

Direct Negotiations

In one way or another, too, an attempt may be made to refer the whole Report to direct negotiations between China and Japan, without specifying that the parties should be bound to accept the Report as the basis of discussion and, of course, without touching the questions of the recognition of Manchukuo by Japan or the withdrawal of Japanese troops.

Non-recognition

A third possibility is that foreshadowed by the Tokio correspondent of the *Times* in the issue of August 29th, namely, that the League should be offered a chance by the Japanese to save its face and retain Japanese membership without cramping Japan's style in Manchuria through some Japanese brand of the Stimson non-recognition doctrine, that is, through some platonic declaration that the Members of the League will not recognise Manchukuo. Japanese officials, as the *Times* Tokio correspondent remarks, aver that they do not care in the least whether anyone recognises Manchukuo and are quite prepared to stay on in the League on these terms, provided nothing really rude is said.

It may also be taken for granted that, following precedent, the strongest pressure will be put upon the Chinese to accept some solution of this sort, that is, to accept the League's virtually surrendering to Japan, washing its hands of the matter, and telling the Chinese to do the best they can with a number of scraps of paper entitled Covenant, Nine-Power Treaty, Paris Pact, and Lytton Report.

The Assembly: Attitude of the Small Powers

But it is most improbable that the Japanese, even with our help, will succeed in getting any such policy through the Assembly. For the small States, who for a time took a strong stand during the March Assembly, are now likely to be far stronger. In March they were told that the issue was to declare Japan guilty of resort to war under Article 16, and that this meant the application of sanctions; as it was the great Powers who would have to take the risk in case it came to sanctions, it was not possible for the small Powers to push them against their will into adopting this attitude. They were further told that the situation was so peculiar in the Far East as not to constitute a precedent for the applicaton of the Covenant, and that they did not possess the detailed knowledge which the great Powers enjoyed of the local situation. Most important of all, they felt that the United States supported them up to the point of getting the principle of non-recognition adopted in the March Resolution, but did not want to go farther at the time.

This time the issue is infinitely graver; Shanghai was a side-show, but Manchuria is the heart of the whole dispute. In March a temporising policy was defensible on the ground that we must await the Lytton Report. But to tolerate Japan's continued presence in the League in the teeth of her rejection of the Lytton Report and continued occupation of Manchuria would mean that Japan, as a Permanent Member of the Council, would be one of the principal judges, one of the leading partners in the co-operative association known as the League of Nations. The League would have ended by giving a sort of international moral sanction, or at least condonation, to the policy of waging an undeclared war in order to foment a separatist movement on the territory of a Member of the League, and to set up by force of arms a puppet government on such territory. No State with minorities, nor indeed any weak Power with strong neighbours, could tolerate such a precedent, for it would mean that weak States were worse off as Members of the League than they had been before the war, and that the League, so far from conferring security, merely added the spice of international hypocrisy to the substance of national violence. Therefore, this is an issue on which they cannot yield. There is no question of applying sanctions, and the Lytton Report will supply all the local knowledge required. The American attitude has become a great deal firmer than it was in March and will give the small Powers every encouragement.

The French Attitude

In France, too, since the middle of September there has been a change in the attitude of the Government, of which the first symptom was a leading article in the *Temps* of September 16th. The Radical Government of M. Herriot (who, with M. Painlevé, had denounced Japanese aggression when in opposition) and still more their Radical and Socialist supporters in the Chamber, who have been strongly for applying the Covenant since the outbreak of the conflict, were never happy about the policy of their predecessors in the Sino-Japanese conflict. But during his first months of office M. Herriot was so overwhelmed with the Reparations problem, the Disarmament Conference and domestic difficulties, that he let M. Paul-Boncour go on handling this issue in the same nerveless manner as he had done under the Tardieu Government. But by the middle of September the truth which had been dawning for some time came home fully to the French Cabinet, namely, that the Covenant was being undermined. The French Government decided that the situation in Europe was now so critical and so full of ugly possibilities that France must stand firmly on the only treaty security she had, namely the Covenant, and must seek the friendship of the United States. She could not, the Cabinet further decided, afford in the circumstances to have one policy in the Far East of letting the Covenant go by default, and another in Europe of basing her security on the Covenant. And as France's interests in the Far East are negligible compared with her interest in European security, the conclusion to which this reasoning led the French Government is obvious.

Attitude of the United States

Last, and perhaps most important, the United States feels that its whole policy in the Far East for the last thirty years, the peace of the Pacific and ultimately the peace of the world, are at stake in this conflict. The Americans are fully aware of the advantages that the League affords as the only collective system of treaty obligations and machinery for international action, and are anxious to interpret the Paris Pact and the Nine-Power Treaty so as to afford a legal basis for active co-operation with the League. And they are determined that the non-recognition policy should be applied in such a way as to constitute a real obstacle to the consummation of Japanese

ambitions, and should be a means of isolating Japan effectively.

The British Attitude

This brings us to the British position. There is reason to believe that there is dissension in the Cabinet, for the Prime Minister and some of his more enlightened colleagues realise the gravity of the widening gap between American and British policy, and remember that in 1922 Great Britain was forced by Dominion pressure to abandon the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and come down on the side of the United States, Disarmament and the Nine-Power Treaty. But the majority of the Cabinet still support Sir John Simon in a policy of drift and passive connivance at Japanese aggression. The official attitude is described with striking accuracy in a despatch from its London correspondent published by the *New York Times* on August 16th.

> Official quarters [in London] consider the Lytton Report as a grave inconvenience—to put it mildly—in view of the almost traditional British policy of avoiding antagonising Japan over Manchuria. That the Earl of Lytton, Chairman of the Commission, is British is regarded as unfortunate . . .
>
> But the British are unhappiest of all over the serious difference of opinion with the United States over the Manchurian issue—a difference that will test all the power of compromise of Sir John Simon, the Foreign Minister, to the uttermost. Despite pronouncements from Washington indicating stiffening of the American attitude toward Japan, the British Government is still unready to support the Washington State Department . . .
>
> British statesmen are careful not to admit that the Manchurian trouble may influence the coming debt negotiations. Nevertheless, they are not happy over the coincidence that next winter, just when they will be seeking debt concessions from the United States, they may be thwarting the American policy at Geneva.

The fact that Great Britain consented to the Manchurian inquiry at all is deeply regretted.

> In the official British view, Japanese domination of Manchuria has been developing for the last two generations, having begun long before any Covenant or League of Nations existed. Despite the events in Shanghai last winter, the British Government and businessmen are still convinced that their interests in the Far East are safeguarded best by good relations with Tokio. Certainly, British business men place more trust in a Japanese than in a Chinese regime in Manchuria and believe they could profit under Japanese occupation, even if there were preferential treatment of Japanese commerce.

There is a great body of opinion, the despatch concludes, upholding the League against Japan, but this is a nationalist business Government and it is still standing firmly with Japan, although not at all happy over the prospects. The State Department will have a difficult time in bringing the British Government round to its way of thinking.

On September 17th the London *Times* published a despatch from its always well-informed Washington correspondent, who writes that Mr. Stimson is giving almost all his time to the Sino-Japanese conflict, but has nearly abandoned hope of receiving British or French support. (The French attitude has, as mentioned above, changed recently.) His policy is therefore "definitely one of giving the smaller Members of the League of Nations all possible support in the hope that they can prevent Great Britain and France from absolving the Japanese from blame in Manchuria."

He then refers to a leading article in the highly important and moderate Scripps-Howard chain of newspapers, which, after explaining the issues and criticising British and French policy insists that :

> Two steps are imperative at once ; the United States should demand openly that Great Britain and France declare themselves publicly. The United States should ban all military shipments from this country to Japan.

This, then, is the situation as regards China, Japan, the Lytton Report, the small Powers, France and our United States, that will face us at the Assembly. Will the official British attitude remain unchanged ?

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